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Cassius

DIONYSIUS LONGINUS

ON THE

SUBLIME:

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK.

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WITH

NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS,

AND

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE

LIFE, WRITINGS, AND CHARACTER OF THE AUTHOR.

By WILLIAM SMITH, D. D.
DEAN OF CHESTER.

Thee, great Longinus! all the Nine inspire,
And fill their critic with a poet's fire;
An ardent judge, who, zealous in his trust,
With warmth gives sentence, and is always just;
Whose own example strengthens all his laws,
And is himself the great Sublime he draws.

POPE.

United Th.
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1819
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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GEORGE, EARL OF MACCLESFIELD,

Viscount Parker of Ewelme, and Baron Parker of Macclesfield.

My Lord,

The greatest degree of purity and splendour united, that Longinus *has for some ages appeared in, was under the patronage of the late Lord* Macclesfield. *A writer of so much spirit and judgment, had a just claim to the protection of so elevated a genius, and so judicious an encourager of polite learning.* Longinus *is now going to appear in an* English *dress, and begs the support of your* Lordship's *name. He has undergone no farther alteration, than what was absolutely necessary to make him* English. *His sense is faithfully represented; but whether this translation has any of the original spirit, is a decision peculiar only to those who can relish unaffected grandeur and natural Sublimity, with the same judicious taste as your Lordship.*

It is needless to say any thing to your Lordship about the other parts of this performance, since they alone can plead effectually for themselves. I went through this work, animated with a view of pleas-

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ing every body; and publish it in some fear of pleasing none. Yet I lay hold with pleasure on this opportunity of paying my respects to your LORDSHIP, *and giving this public proof, that I am,*

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient

and most humble Servant,

WILLIAM SMITH.

PREFACE.

It will, without doubt, be expected, that the Reader should be made privy to the reasons upon which this Work was undertaken, and is now made public. The intrinsic beauty of the piece itself first allured me to the attempt; and a regard for the public, especially for those who might be unable to read the original, was the main inducement to its publication.

The Treatise on the SUBLIME had slept for several ages, covered up in the dust of libraries, till the middle of the sixteenth century. The first Latin version by Gabriel de Petra was printed at Geneva in 1612. But the first good translation of it into any modern language, was the French one of the famous Boileau, which, though not always faithful to the text, yet has an elegance and a spirit which few will ever be able to equal, much less to surpass.

The present translation was finished before I knew of any prior attempt to make Longinus speak English. The first translation of him I met with, was published by Mr. Welsted, in 1724. But I was very much surprised, upon a perusal, to find it only Boileau's translation misrepresented and mangled. For every beauty is impaired, if not totally effaced, and every error (even down to those of the printer) most injudiciously preserved.

I have since accidentally met with two other English versions of this Treatise; one by J. Hall, Esq. London, 1652; the other without a name, but printed at Oxford in 1698, and said in the title-page to have been compared with the French of Boileau. I saw nothing in either of these which did not yield the greatest encouragement to a new attempt.

No less than nine years have intervened since the finishing

of this translation, in which space it has been frequently revised, submitted to the censure of friends, and amended again and again by a more attentive study of the original. The design was, if possible, to make it read like an original: whether I have succeeded in this, the bulk of my readers may judge; but whether the translation be good, or come any thing near to the life, the spirit, the energy of Longinus, is a decision peculiar to men of learning and taste, who alone know the difficulties which attend such an undertaking, and will be impartial enough to give the translator the necessary indulgence.

Longinus himself was never accurately enough published, nor thoroughly understood, till Dr. Pearce* did him justice in his late editions at London. My thanks are due to that gentleman, not only for his correct editions, on account of which the whole learned world is indebted to him, but for those animadversions and corrections of this translation, with which he so kindly favoured me. Most of the remarks and observations were drawn up before I had read his Latin notes.

I am not the least in pain about the pertinency of those instances which I have brought from the sacred writers, as well as from some of the finest of our own country, to illustrate the criticisms of Longinus. I am only fearful, lest, among the multiplicity of such as might be had, I may be thought to have omitted some of the best. I am sensible, that what I have done, might be done much better; but if I have the good fortune to contribute a little towards the fixing a true judicious taste, and enabling my readers to distinguish sense from sound, grandeur from pomp, and the Sublime from fustian and bombast, I shall think my time well spent; and shall be ready to submit to the censures of a judge, but shall only smile at the snarling of what is commonly called a critic.

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* Now Lord Bishop of Rochester.

JAN. 1770.

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SOME ACCOUNT OF THE

LIFE, WRITINGS, & CHARACTER,

OF

LONGINUS.

THERE is no part of history more agreeable in itself, nor more improving to the mind, than the lives of those who have distinguished themselves from the herd of mankind, and set themselves up to public regard. A particular tribute of admiration is always due, and is generally paid, to the hero, the philosopher, and the scholar. It requires, indeed, a strength of understanding and a solidity of judgment, to distinguish those actions which are truly great, from such as have only the show and appearance of it. The noise of victories and the pomp of triumphs are apt to make deeper impressions on common minds, than the calm and even labours of men of a studious and philosophical turn, though the latter are, for the most

part, more commendable in themselves and more useful to the world. The imagination of the bulk of mankind is more alive than their judgment; hence Cæsar is more admired for the part he acted in the plains of Pharsalia, than for the recollection of his mind the night after the victory, by which he armed himself against the insolence of success, and formed resolutions of forgiving his enemies, and triumphing more by clemency and mildness, than he had before by his courage and his arms. Deeds which we can only admire, are not so fit for sedate contemplation, as those which we may also imitate. We may not be able to plan or execute a victory with the Scipios and Cæsars, but we may improve and fortify our understandings, by inspecting their scenes of study and reflection; we may apply the contemplations of the wise to private use, so as to make our passions obedient to our reason, our reason productive of inward tranquillity, and sometimes of real and substantial advantage to all our fellow-creatures.

Such remarks as the preceding can be no improper introduction to whatever may be collected concerning the life of our Author. It will turn out at best but dark and imper-

fect, yet open into two principal views, which may prove of double use to a thoughtful and considerate reader. As a Writer of a refined and polished taste, of a sound and penetrating judgment, it will lead him to such methods of thinking, as are the innocent and embellishing amusements of life; as a Philosopher of enlarged and generous sentiments, a friend to virtue, a steady champion, and an intrepid martyr for liberty, it will teach him, that nothing can be great and glorious, which is not just and good; and that the dignity of what we utter, and what we act, depends entirely on the dignity of our thoughts, and the inward grandeur and elevation of the soul.

Searching for the particular passages and incidents of the life of Longinus, is like travelling now-a-days through those countries in which it was spent. We meet with nothing but continual scenes of devastation and ruin. In one place, a beautiful spot smiling through the bounty of nature, yet overrun with weeds and thorns for want of culture, presents itself to view; in another, a pile of stones lying in the same confusion in which they fell, with here and there a nodding wall; and sometimes a curious pillar still erect, excites the

sorrowful remembrance of what noble edifices and how fine a city once crowned the place. Tyrants and barbarians are not less pernicious to learning and improvement, than to cities and nations. Bare names are preserved and handed down to us, but little more. Who were the destroyers of all the rest, we know with regret, but the value of what is destroyed, we can only guess and deplore.

Suidas.
J. Jonsius.
Dr. Pearce.

What countryman Longinus was, cannot certainly be discovered. Some fancy him a Syrian, and that he was born at Emisa, because an uncle of his, one Fronto, a rhetorician, is called by Suidas an Emisenian. But others, with greater probability, suppose him an Athenian. That he was a Grecian, is plain from two * passages in the following Treatise; in one of which he uses this expression, "If we Grecians;" and in the other he expressly calls Demosthenes his countryman. His name was Dionysius Longinus, to which Suidas makes the addition of Cassius; but that of his father is entirely unknown; a point (it is true) of small importance, since

* See Sect. xii.

a son of excellence and worth, reflects a glory upon, instead of receiving any from, his father. By his mother Frontonis he was allied, after two or three removes, to the celebrated Plutarch. We are also at a loss for the employment of his parents, their station in life, and the beginning of his education; but a * remnant of his own writings informs us, that his youth was spent in travelling with them, which gave him an opportunity to increase his knowledge, and open his mind with that generous enlargement, which men of sense and judgment will unavoidably receive, from variety of objects and diversity of conversation. The improvement of his mind was always uppermost in his thoughts, and his thirst after knowledge led him to those channels by which it is conveyed. Wherever men of learning were to be found, he was present, and lost no opportunity of forming a familiarity and intimacy with them. Ammonius and Origen, philosophers of no small reputation in that age, were two of those whom he visited and heard with the greatest attention. As he was not deficient in vivacity of parts, quickness of apprehension, and strength of understanding, the pro-

* Fragment. quintum.

gress of his improvement must needs have been equal to his industry and diligence in seeking after it. He was capable of learning whatever he desired, and no doubt he desired to learn whatever was commendable and useful.

The travels of Longinus ended with his arrival at Athens, where he fixed his residence. This city was then, and had been for some ages, the University of the world. It was the constant resort of all who were able to teach, or willing to improve; the grand and lasting reservoir of philosophy and learning, from whence were drawn every rivulet and stream that watered and cultivated the rest of the world. Here our author pursued the studies of humanity and philosophy with the greatest application, and soon became the most remarkable person in a place so remarkable as Athens. Here he published his Treatise on the Sublime, which raised his reputation to such a height, as no critic, either before or since, durst ever aspire to. He was a perfect master of the ancient writings of Greece, and intimately acquainted not only with the works but the very genius and spirit with which they were written. His cotemporaries there had such an implicit faith in his judgment,

and were so well convinced of the perfection of his taste, that they appointed him judge of all the ancient authors, and learned to distinguish between the genuine and spurious productions of antiquity, from his opinions and sentiments about them. He was looked upon by them as infallible and unerring, and therefore by his decrees were fine writing and fine sense established, and his sentence stamped its intrinsic value upon every piece. The entrusting any one person with so delicate a commission, is an extraordinary instance of complaisance: it is without a precedent in every age before, and unparalleled in any of the succeeding; as it is fit it should, till another Longinus shall arise. But in regard to him, it does honour to those who lodged it in his hands. For no classic writer ever suffered in character from an erroneous censure of Longinus. He was, as I observed before, a perfect master of the style and peculiar turn of thought of them all, and could discern every beauty or blemish in every composition. In vain might inferior critics exclaim against this monopoly of judgment. Whatever objections they raised against it were mere air and unregarded sounds. And whatever they blamed, or whatever they com-

mended, was received or rejected by the public, only as it met with the approbation of Longinus, or was confirmed and ratified by his sovereign decision.

Eunapius.

His stay at Athens seems to have been of long continuance, and that city perhaps had never enjoyed so able a Professor of fine learning, eloquence, and philosophy united. Whilst he taught here, he had, amongst others, the famous Porphyry for his pupil. The system of philosophy which he went upon, was the Academic; for whose founder, Plato, he had so great a veneration, that he celebrated the anniversary of his birth with the highest solemnity. There is something agreeable even in the distant fancy; how delightful then must those reflections have been, which could not but arise in the breast of Longinus, that he was explaining and recommending the doctrine of Plato, in those calm retreats where he himself had written; that he was teaching his scholars the eloquence of Demosthenes, on the very spot, perhaps, where he had formerly thundered; and was professing rhetoric in the place where Cicero had studied!

The mind of our Author was not so con-

tracted, as to be fit only for a life of stillness and tranquillity. Fine genius, and a true philosophic turn, qualify not only for study and retirement, but will enable their owners to shine, I will not say in more honourable, but in more conspicuous views, and to appear on the public stage of life with dignity and honour. And it was the fortune of Longinus to be drawn from the contemplative shades of Athens, to mix in more active scenes, to train up young princes to virtue and glory, to guide the busy and ambitious passions of the great to noble ends, to struggle for, and at last to die in the cause of liberty.

During the residence of Longinus at Athens, the Emperor Valerian had undertaken an expedition against the Persians, who had revolted from the Roman yoke. He was assisted in it by Odenathus, king of Palmyra, who, after the death of Valerian, carried on the war with uncommon spirit and success. Gallienus, who succeeded his father Valerian at Rome, being a prince of a weak and effeminate soul, of the most dissolute and abandoned manners, without any shadow of worth in himself, was willing to get a support in the valour of Odenathus, and therefore he made him his part- *Trebellius Pollio.*

ner in empire by the title of Augustus, and decreed his medals, strucken in honour of the Persian victories, to be current coin throughout the empire. Odenathus, says an historian, seemed born for the empire of the world, and would probably have risen to it, had he not been taken off, in a career of victory, by the treachery of his own relations. His abilities were so great, and his actions so illustrious, that they were above the competition of every person then alive, except his own wife Zenobia, a lady of so extraordinary magnanimity and virtue, that she outshone even her husband, and engrossed the attention and admiration of the world. She was descended from the ancient race of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, and had all those qualifications which are the ornament of her own, and the glory of the other sex. A miracle of beauty, but chaste to a prodigy: in punishing the bad, inflexibly severe; in rewarding the good, or relieving the distressed, benevolent and active. Splendid, but not profuse; and generous without prodigality. Superior to the toils and hardships of war, she was generally on horseback; and would sometimes march on foot with her soldiers. She was skilled in several languages, and is said to have drawn up herself

an epitome of the Alexandrian and Oriental history.

The great reputation of Longinus had been wafted to the ears of Zenobia, who prevailed upon him to quit Athens, and undertake the education of her sons. He quickly gained an uncommon share in her esteem, as she found him not only qualified to form the tender minds of the young, but to improve the virtue, and enlighten the understanding of the aged. In his conversation she spent the vacant hours of her life, modelling her sentiments by his instructions, and steering herself by his counsels in the whole series of her conduct; and in carrying on that plan of empire, which she herself had formed, which her husband Odenathus had begun to execute, but had left imperfect. The number of competitors, who, in the vicious and scandalous reign of Gallienus, set up for the empire, but with abilities far inferior to those of Zenobia, gave her an opportunity to extend her conquests, by an uncommon tide of success, over all the East. Claudius, who succeeded Gallienus at Rome, was employed during his whole reign, which was very short, against the Northern nations. Their reduction was afterwards completed by Aurelian, the great-

est soldier that had for a long time worn the imperial purple. He then turned his arms against Zenobia, being surprised as well at the rapidity of her conquests, as enraged that she had dared to assume the title of Queen of the East.

Vopiscus. Zosimus. He marched against her with the best of his forces, and met with no check in his expedition till he advanced as far as Antioch. Zenobia was there in readiness to oppose his further progress. But the armies coming to an engagement at Daphne, near Antioch, she was defeated by the good conduct of Aurelian, and leaving Antioch at his mercy, retired with her army to Emisa. The Emperor marched immediately after, and found her ready to give him battle in the plains before the city. The dispute was sharp and bloody on both sides, till at last the victory inclined a second time to Aurelian; and the unfortunate Zenobia, not daring to confide in the Emisenians, was again compelled to retire towards her capital, Palmyra. As the town was strongly fortified, and the inhabitants full of zeal for her service, and affection for her person, she made no doubt of defending herself here, in spite of the warmest efforts of Aurelian, till she could

raise new forces, and venture again into the open field. Aurelian was not long behind, his activity impelled him forwards, to crown his former success, by completing the conquest of Zenobia. His march was terribly harassed by the frequent attacks of the Syrian banditti; and when he came up, he found Palmyra so strongly fortified and so bravely defended, that though he invested it with his army, yet the siege was attended with a thousand difficulties. His army was daily weakened and dispirited by the gallant resistance of the Palmyrenians, and his own life sometimes in the utmost danger. Tired at last with the obstinacy of the besieged, and almost worn out by continued fatigues, he sent Zenobia a written summons to surrender, as if his words could strike terror into her, whom by force of arms he was unable to subdue.

AURELIAN, EMPEROR OF THE ROMAN WORLD, AND RECOVERER OF THE EAST, TO ZENOBIA AND HER ADHERENTS.

"Why am I forced to command, what you ought voluntarily to have done already? I charge you to surrender, and thereby

avoid the certain penalty of death, which otherwise attends you. You, Zenobia, shall spend the remainder of your life, where I, by the advice of the most honourable senate, shall think proper to place you. Your jewels, your silver, your gold, your finest apparel, your horses, and your camels, you shall resign to the disposal of the Romans, in order to preserve the Palmyrenians from being divested of all their former privileges."

Zenobia, not in the least affrighted by the menace, nor soothed by the cruel promise of a life in exile and obscurity; resolved by her answer to convince Aurelian, that he should find the stoutest resistance from her, whom he thought to frighten into compliance. This answer was drawn up by Longinus in a spirit peculiar to himself, and worthy of his mistress.

ZENOBIA, QUEEN OF THE EAST, TO THE EMPEROR AURELIAN.

"Never was such an unreasonable demand proposed, or such rigorous terms offered, by any but yourself. Remember, Aurelian, that in war, whatever is done, should be done by

valour. You imperiously command me to surrender; but can you forget, that Cleopatra chose rather to die with the title of Queen, than to live in any inferior dignity? We expect succours from Persia; the Saracens are arming in our cause; even the Syrian banditti have already defeated your army. Judge what you are to expect from a conjunction of these forces. You shall be compelled to abate that pride, with which, as if you were absolute lord of the universe, you command me to become your captive."

Aurelian, says Vopiscus, had no sooner read this disdainful letter, than he blushed (not so much with shame, as) with indignation. He redoubled his efforts, invested the town more closely than ever, and kept it in continual alarms. No art was left untried, which the conduct of a general could suggest, or the bravery of angry soldiers could put in execution. He intercepted the aid which was marching from Persia to its relief. He reduced the Saracen and Armenian forces, either by strength of arms, or the subtilty of intrigues; till at length, the Palmyrenians, deprived of all prospect of succour, and worn out by continual assaults from with-

out, and by famine within, were obliged to open the gates and receive their conqueror. The Queen and Longinus could not tamely stay to put on their chains. Mounted on the swiftest camels, they endeavoured to fly into Persia, to make fresh head against Aurelian, who entering the city was vexed to find his victory imperfect, and Zenobia yet unsubdued. A body of the swiftest horse was immediately dispatched in pursuit, who overtook and made them prisoners as they were crossing the Euphrates. Aurelian, after he had settled Palmyra, returned to Emisa, whither the captives were carried after him. He sat on his tribunal to receive Zenobia, or rather to insult her. The Roman soldiers throng around her, and demand her death with incessant shouts. Zenobia now was no longer herself: the former greatness of her spirit quite sunk within her; she owned a master, and pleaded for her life. "Her counsellors (she said) were to be blamed, and not herself. What could a weak short-sighted woman do, when beset by artful and ambitious men, who made her subservient to all their schemes? She never had aimed at empire, had they not placed it before her eyes in all its allurements. The let-

Zosimus.

ter which affronted Aurelian was not her own; Longinus wrote it, the insolence was his." This was no sooner heard, than Aurelian, who was soldier enough to conquer, but not hero enough to forgive, poured all his vengeance on the head of Longinus. He was borne away to immediate execution, amidst the generous condolence of those who knew his merit, and admired the inward generosity of his soul. He pitied Zenobia, and comforted his friends. He looked upon death as a blessing, since it rescued his body from slavery, and gave his soul the most desirable freedom. "This world (said he with his expiring breath) is nothing but a prison; happy therefore he who gets soonest out of it, and gains his liberty."

The writings of Longinus are numerous, some on philosophical, but the greatest part on critical subjects. Dr. Pearce has collected the titles of twenty-five Treatises, none of which, except this on the Sublime, have escaped from the depredations of time and barbarians. And even this is rescued as from a wreck, damaged too much and shattered by the storm. Yet on this little and imperfect piece has the fame of Longinus been founded and erected. The learned and judi-

cious have bestowed extraordinary commendation upon it. The Golden Treatise is its general title. It is one of those valuable remnants of antiquity, of which enough remains to engage our admiration, and excite an earnest regret for every particle of it that has perished. It resembles those mutilated statues, which are sometimes digged out of ruins. Limbs are broken off, which it is not in the power of any living artist to replace, because the fine proportion and delicate finishing of the trunk excludes all hope of equalling such masterly performances. From a constant inspection and close study of such an antique fragment of Rome, Michael Angelo learned to execute and to teach the art of Sculpture; it was therefore called Michael Angelo's School. The same use may be made of this imperfect piece on the Sublime, since it is a noble school for critics, poets, orators, and historians.

"The Sublime," says Longinus, "is an image reflected from the inward greatness of the soul." The remark is refined and just; and who more deserving than he of its application? Let his sentiments be considered as reflections from his own mind; let this piece on the Sublime be regarded as the

picture of its author. It is a pity we have not a larger portrait of him; but as that cannot be had, we must take up at present with this incomplete, though beautiful miniature. The features are graceful, the air is noble, the colouring lively enough to shew how fine it was, and how many qualifications are necessary to form the character of a critic with dignity and applause.

Elevation of thought, the greatest qualification requisite to an orator or poet, is equally necessary to a critic, and is the most shining talent in Longinus. Nature had implanted the seeds of it within him, which he himself improved and nursed up to perfection, by an intimacy with the greatest and sublimest writers. Whenever he has Homer in view, he catches his fire, and increases the light and ardour of it. The space between heaven and earth marks out the extent of the poet's genius; but the world itself seems too narrow a confinement for that of the critic.* And though his thoughts are sometimes stretched to an immeasurable size, yet they are always great without swelling, bold without rashness, far beyond what any other could

* See Sect. ix.

or durst have said, and always proper and judicious.

As his sentiments are noble and lofty, so his style is masterly, enlivened by variety, and flexible with ease. There is no beauty pointed out by him in any other, which he does not imitate, and frequently excel, whilst he is making remarks upon it. How he admires and improves upon Homer, has been hinted already. When Plato is his subject, the words glide along in a smooth, easy, and peaceable flow. When he speaks of Hyperides, he copies at once his engaging manner, the simplicity, sweetness, and harmony of his style. With Demosthenes he is vehement, abrupt, and disorderly regular; he dazzles with his lightning, and terrifies with his thunder. When he parallels the Greek with the Roman orator, he shews in two periods the distinguishing excellences of each; the first is a very hurricane, which bears down all before it; the last, a conflagration, gentle in its beginning, gradually dispersed, increasing and getting to such a head, as to rage beyond resistance, and devour all things. His sense is every where the very thing he would express, and the sound of his words is an echo to his sense.

His judgment is exact and impartial, both in what he blames and what he commends. The sentence he pronounces is founded upon and supported by reasons which are satisfactory and just. His approbation is not attended with fits of stupid admiration, or gaping, like an idiot, at something surprising which he cannot comprehend; nor are his censures fretful and waspish. He stings, like the bee, what actually annoys him; but carries honey along with him, which, if it heals not the wound, yet assuages the smart.

His candour is extensive as his judgment. The penetration of the one obliged him to reprove what was amiss; the secret workings of the other bias him to excuse or extenuate it in the best manner he is able. Whenever he lays open the faults of a writer, he forgets not to mention the qualities he had which were deserving of praise. Where Homer sinks into trifles, he cannot help reproving him; but though Homer nods sometimes, he is Homer still; excelling all the world when broad awake, and in his fits of drowsiness, dreaming like a god.

The good-nature, also, of Longinus must not pass without notice. He bore an aversion to the sneers and cavils of those who, un-

equal to the weighty province of criticism, abuse it, and become its nuisance. He frequently takes pains to shew how misplaced their animadversions are, and to defend the injured from aspersions. There is an instance of this in his vindication of Theopompus from the censure of Cecilius.* He cannot endure to see what is right in that author perverted into error; nor where he really errs, will he suffer him to pass unreproved.† Yet here his good-nature exerts itself again, and he proposes divers methods of amending what is wrong.

The judgment, and candour, and impartiality, with which Longinus declares his sentiments of the writings of others, will, I am persuaded, rise in our esteem, when we reflect on that exemplary piece of justice he has done to Moses. The manner of his quoting that celebrated passage‡ from him, is as honourable to the critic, as the quotation itself to the Jewish legislator. Whether he believed the Mosaic history of the creation, is a point in which we are not in the least concerned; but it was plainly his opinion, that though it be condescendingly suited to the finite con-

* Sect. xxxi. † Sect. xliii. ‡ Sect. ix.

ception of man, yet it is related in a manner not inconsistent with the majesty of God. To contend, as some do, that he never read Moses, is trifling, or rather litigious. The Greek translation had been dispersed throughout the Roman empire, long before the time in which he lived: and no man of a serious, much less of a philosophical turn, could reject it as unworthy a perusal. Besides, Zenobia, according to the testimony of Photius,* was a Jewish convert. And I have somewhere seen it mentioned from Bellarmine, that she was a Christian; but as I am a stranger to the reasons on which he founds the assertion, I shall lay no stress upon it.

But there is strong probability, that Longinus was not only acquainted with the writings of the Old Testament, but with those also of the New, since to a manuscript of the latter in the Vatican library, there is prefixed a passage from some of this Author's writings, which is preserved there as an instance of his judgment. He is drawing up a list of the greatest orators, and at the close he says, "And further, Paul of Tarsus, the chief supporter of an opinion not yet esta-

* Prefixed to Hudson's Longinus.

blished." Fabricius, I own, has been so officiously kind as to attribute these words to Christian forgery;* but for what reasons I cannot conjecture. If for any of real weight and importance, certainly he ought not to have concealed them from the world.

If Longinus ever saw any of the writings of St. Paul, he could not but entertain a high opinion of him. Such a judge must needs applaud so masterly an orator. For where is the writer that can vie with him in sublime and pathetic eloquence? Demosthenes could rouse up the Athenians against Philip, and Cicero strike shame and confusion into the breasts of Antony or Catiline; and did not the eloquence of St. Paul, though bound in degrading fetters, make the oppressive, the abandoned Felix tremble, and almost persuade Agrippa, in spite of all his prejudice, to be a Christian? Homer, after his death, was looked upon as more than human, and temples were erected to his honour; and was not St. Paul admired as a god, even whilst he was on earth, when the inhabitants of Lystra would have sacrificed to him? Let his writings be examined and judged by the

* Bibliotheca Græca, l. 4. c. 31.

severest test of the severest critics, and they cannot be found deficient; nay, they will appear more abundantly stocked with sublime and pathetic thoughts, with strong and beautiful figures, with nervous and elegant expressions, than any other composition in the world.

But, to leave this digression: it is a remark of Sir William Temple, that no pure Greek was written after the reign of the Antonini. But the diction of Longinus, though less pure than that of Aristotle, is elegant and nervous, the conciseness or diffuseness of his periods being always suited to the nature of his subject. The terms he uses are generally so strong and expressive, and sometimes so artfully compounded, that they cannot be rendered into another language without wide circumlocution. He has a high and masculine turn of thought, unknown to any other writer, which enforced him to give all possible strength and energy to his words, that his language might be properly adjusted to his sense, and the sublimity of the latter be uniformly supported by the grandeur of the former.

But further, there appears not in him the least show or affectation of learning, though

his stock was wonderfully large, yet without any prejudice to the brightness of his fancy. Some writers are even profuse of their commendations of him in this respect. For how extensive must his reading have been, to deserve those appellations given him by Eunapius, that he was a *living library*, and a *walking museum?* Large reading, without a due balance of judgment, is like a voracious appetite with a bad digestion; it breaks out according to the natural complexion of different persons, either into learned dulness, or a brisk but insipid pedantry. In Longinus, it was so far from palling or extinguishing, that on the contrary it sharpened and enlivened his taste. He was not so surly as to reject the sentiments of others without examination, but he had the wisdom to stick by his own.

Let us pause a little here, and consider what a disagreeable and shocking contrast there is between the genius, the taste, the candour, the good-nature, the generosity, and modesty of Longinus, and the heaviness, the dulness, the snarling and sneering temper of modern critics, who can feast on inadvertent slips, and triumph over what they think a blunder. *His* very rules are shining examples of what they inculcate; *his* remarks the very excel-

lences he is pointing out. *Theirs* are often inversions of what is right, and sinking other men by clogging them with a weight of their own lead. *He* keeps the same majestic pace, or soars aloft with his authors; *they* are either creeping after, or plunging below them, fitted more by nature for heroes of a Dunciad, than for judges of fine sense and fine writing. The business of a critic is not only to find fault, nor to be all bitterness and gall. Yet such behaviour, in those who have usurped the name, has brought the office into scandal and contempt. An Essay on Criticism appears but once in an age; and what a tedious interval is there between Longinus and Mr. Addison!

Having traced our Author thus far as a critic, we must view him now in another light, I mean as a Philosopher. In him these are not different, but mutually depending and coexisting parts of the same character. To judge in a worthy manner of the performances of men, we must know the dignity of human nature, the reach of the human understanding, the ends for which we were created, and the means of their attainment. In these speculations Longinus will make no contempt-

ible figure, and I hope the view will not appear superfluous or useless.

Man cannot arrive to a just and proper understanding of himself, without worthy notions of the Supreme Being. The sad depravations of the pagan world are chiefly to be attributed to a deficiency in this respect. Homer has exalted his heroes at the expense of his deities, and sunken the divine nature far below the human; and therefore deserves that censure of blasphemy which Longinus has passed upon him. Had the poet designed to have turned the imaginary gods of his idolatrous countrymen into ridicule, he could hardly have taken a better method. Yet what he has said has never been understood in that light; and though the whole may be allegorical, as his commentators would fain persuade us, yet this will be no excuse for the malignancy of its effects on a superstitious world. The discourses of Socrates, and the writings of Plato, had in a great measure corrected the notions of inquisitive and thoughtful men in this particular, and caused the distinction of religion into vulgar and philosophical. By what Longinus has said of Homer, it is plain to me, that his religion was

of the latter sort. Though we allow him not to be a Christian or a Jewish convert, yet he was no idolater, since without a knowledge and reverence of the Divine perfections, he never could have formed his noble ideas of human nature.

This life he considers as a public theatre, on which men are to act their parts. A thirst after glory, and an emulation of whatever is great and excellent, is implanted in their minds, to quicken their pursuits after real grandeur, and to enable them to approach, as near as their finite abilities will admit, to Divinity itself. Upon these principles, he accounts for the vast stretch and penetration of the human understanding; to these he ascribes the labours of men of genius; and by the predominancy of them in their minds, ascertains the success of their attempts. In the same manner he accounts for that turn in the mind, which biasses us to admire more what is great and uncommon, than what is ordinary and familiar, however useful. There are other masterly reflections of this kind in the 33d and 34th Sections, which are only to be excelled by Mr. Addison's Essay on the Imagination. Whoever reads this part of Longinus, and that piece of Mr. Addison's

with attention, will form notions of them both very much to their honour.

Yet telling us we were born to pursue what is great, without informing us what is so, would avail but little. Longinus declares for a close and attentive examination of all things. Outsides and surfaces may be splendid and alluring, yet nothing be within deserving our applause. He that suffers himself to be dazzled with a gay and gaudy appearance, will be betrayed into admiration of what the wise contemn; his pursuits will be levelled at wealth, and power, and high rank in life, to the prejudice of his inward tranquillity, and perhaps the wreck of his virtue. The pageantry and pomp of life will be regarded by such a person as true honour and glory; and he will neglect the nobler acquisitions, which are more suited to the dignity of his nature, which alone can give merit to ambition, and centre in solid and substantial grandeur.

The mind is the source and standard of whatever can be considered as great and illustrious in any light. From this our actions and our words must flow, and by this must they be weighed. We must think well, before we can act or speak as we ought. And it is the inward vigour of the soul, though

variously exerted, which forms the patriot, the philosopher, the orator, or the poet: this was the rise of an Alexander, a Socrates, a Demosthenes, and a Homer. Yet this inward vigour is chiefly owing to the bounty of nature, is cherished and improved by education, but cannot reach maturity without other concurrent causes, such as public liberty, and the strictest practice of virtue.

That the seeds of a great genius in any kind must be implanted within, and cherished and improved by education, are points in which the whole world agrees. But the importance of liberty in bringing it to perfection, may perhaps be more liable to debate. Longinus is clear on the affirmative side. He speaks feelingly, but with caution about it, because tyranny and oppression were triumphant at the time he wrote.

He avers, with a spirit of generous indignation, that slavery is the confinement of the soul, and a public dungeon.* On this he charges the suppression of genius and decay of the sublime. The condition of man is deplorable, when he dares not exert his abilities, and runs into imminent danger by say-

* Sect. xliv.

ing or doing what he ought. Tyranny, erected on the ruins of liberty, lays an immediate restraint on the minds of vassals, so that the inborn fire of genius is quickly damped, and suffers at last a total extinction. This must always be a necessary consequence, when what ought to be the reward of an honourable ambition becomes the prey of knaves and flatterers. But the infection gradually spreads, and fear and avarice will bend those to it, whom nature formed for higher employments, and sink lofty orators into pompous flatterers. The truth of this remark will easily appear, if we compare Cicero speaking to Catiline, to the same Cicero pleading before Cæsar for Marcellus. That spirit of adulation, which prevailed so much in England about a century ago, lowered one of the greatest geniuses that ever lived, and turned even the Lord Bacon into a sycophant. And this will be the case wherever power encroaches on the rights of mankind: a servile fear will clog and fetter every rising genius, will strike such an awe upon it in its tender and infant state, as will stick for ever after, and check its generous sallies. No one will write or speak well in such a situation, unless on subjects of mere amusement, and which

cannot, by any indirect tendency, affect his masters. For how shall the vassal dare to talk sublimely on any point wherein his lord acts meanly?

But further, as despotic and unbridled power is generally obtained, so it is as often supported by unjustifiable methods. The splendid and ostentatious pageantry of those at the helm, gives rise to luxury and profuseness among the subjects. These are the fatal sources of dissolute manners, of degenerate sentiments, of infamy and want. As pleasure is supplied by money, no method, however mean, is omitted to procure the latter, because it leads to the enjoyment of the former. Men become corrupt and abject, their minds are enervated and insensible to shame. "The faculties of the soul (in the words of Longinus) * will then grow stupid, their spirit will be lost, and good sense and genius must lay in ruins, when the care and study of man is engaged about the mortal, the worthless part of himself, and he has ceased to cultivate virtue, and polish his nobler part, the soul."

The scope of our Author's reflections in the latter part of the Section is this; that genius

* Sect. xliv.

can never exert itself, or rise to sublimity, where virtue is neglected, and the morals are depraved. Cicero was of the same opinion before him, and Quinctilian has a whole chapter to prove that the great orator must be a good man. Men of the finest genius, who have hitherto appeared in the world, have been for the most part not very defective in their morals, and less in their principles. I am sensible there are exceptions to this observation, but little to the credit of the persons, since their works become the severest satires on themselves, and the manifest opposition between their thought and practice detracts its weight from the one, and marks out the other for public abhorrence.

An inward grandeur of soul is the common centre, from whence every ray of sublimity, either in thought, or action, or discourse, is darted out. For all minds are no more of the same complexion, than all bodies of the same texture. In the latter case, our eyes would meet only with the same uniformity of colour in every object: in the former, we should be all orators or poets, all philosophers, or all blockheads. This would break in upon that beautiful and useful variety, with which the Author of nature has adorned the rational as

well as the material creation. There is in every mind a tendency, though perhaps differently inclined, to what is great and excellent. Happy they, who know their own peculiar bent, who have been blessed with opportunities of giving it the proper culture and polish, and are not cramped or restrained in the liberty of shewing and declaring it to others! There are many fortunate concurrences, without which we cannot attain to any quickness of taste or relish for the Sublime.

I hope what has been said will not be thought an improper introduction to the following Treatise, in which (unless I am deceived) there is a just foundation for every remark that has been made. The Author appears sublime in every view, not only in what he has written, but in the manner in which he acted, and the bravery with which he died; by all acknowledged the Prince of Critics, and by no worse judge than Boileau esteemed a philosopher, worthy to be ranked with Socrates and Cato.

LONGINUS ON THE SUBLIME.

SECTION I.

YOU remember, my dear [1] TERENTIANUS, that when we read over together [2] Cecilius's Treatise on the Sublime, we thought it too mean for a subject of that nature, that it is entirely defective in its principal branches, and that consequently its advantage (which ought to be the principal aim of every writer)

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[1] Who this Terentianus, or Posthumius Terentianus, was, to whom the Author addresses this Treatise, is not possible to be discovered, nor is it of any great importance. But it appears, from some passages in the sequel of this work, that he was a young Roman, a person of a bright genius, an elegant taste, and a particular friend to Longinus. What he says of him, I am confident, was spoken with sincerity more than complaisance, since Longinus must have disdained to flatter, like a modern dedicator.

[2] Cecilius was a Sicilian rhetorician. He lived under Augustus, and was cotemporary with Dionysius of Halicarnassus, with whom he contracted a very close friendship. He is thought to have been the first who wrote on the Sublime.

would prove very small to the readers. Besides, though in every treatise upon any science two points are indispensably required; the first, that the science, which is the subject of it, be fully explained; the second (I mean in order of writing, since in excellence it is far the superior), that plain directions be given, how and by what method such science may be attained; yet Cecilius, who brings a thousand instances to shew what the Sublime is, as if his readers were wholly ignorant of the matter, has omitted, as altogether unnecessary, the method which, judiciously observed, might enable us to raise our natural genius to any height of this SUBLIME. But, perhaps, this writer is not so much to be blamed for his omissions, as commended for his good designs and earnest endeavours. You indeed have laid your commands upon me, to give you my thoughts on this Sublime; let us then, in obedience to those commands, consider whether any thing can be drawn from my private studies, for the service of [3] those who write for the world, or speak in public.

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[3] "Those who write for the world, or speak in public."] I take all this to be implied in the original word πολιτικοις.

But I request you, my dear friend, to give me your opinion on whatever I advance, with that exactness, which is due to truth, and that sincerity which is natural to yourself. For well did the * sage answer the question, "In what do we most resemble the gods?" when he replied, "In doing good and speaking truth." But since I write, my dear friend, to you, who are versed in every branch of polite learning, there will be little occasion to use many previous words in proving, that the Sublime is a certain eminence or perfection of language, and that the greatest writers, both in verse and prose, have by this alone obtained the prize of glory, and filled all time with their renown. For the Sublime not only persuades, but even throws an audience into transport. The Marvellous always works with more surprising force than that which barely persuades or delights. In most cases, it is wholly in our own power either to resist or yield to persuasion. But the Sublime, endued with strength irresistible, strikes home, and triumphs over every hearer. Dexterity of invention, and good order and economy in composition, are not to

* Pythagoras.

be discerned from one or two passages, nor scarcely sometimes from the whole texture of a discourse; but [4] the Sublime, when seasonably addressed, with the rapid force of lightning has borne down all before it, and shewn at one stroke the compacted might of genius. But these, and truths like these, so well known and familiar to himself, I am confident my dear TERENTIANUS can undeniably prove by his own practice.

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[4] "The Sublime, when seasonably addressed," &c.] This sentence is inimitably fine in the original. Dr. Pearce has an ingenious observation upon it. "It is not easy (says he) to determine, whether the precepts of Longinus, or his example, be most to be observed and followed in the course of this work, since his style is possessed of all the sublimity of his subject. Accordingly, in this passage, to express the power of the Sublime, he has made use of his words, with all the art and propriety imaginable. Another writer would have said *διαφορει* and *ενδεικνυται*, but this had been too dull and languid. Our Author uses the preterperfect tense, the better to express the power and rapidity with which sublimity of discourse strikes the minds of its hearers. It is like lightning (says our Author) because you can no more look upon this, when present, than you can upon the flash of that. Besides, the structure of the words in the close of the sentence is admirable. They run along, and are hurried in the celerity of short vowels. They represent to the life the rapid motion either of lightning, or the Sublime."

SECTION II.

But we ought not to advance, before we clear the point, whether or no there be any art in the Sublime.[1] For some are entirely of opinion, that they are guilty of a great mistake, who would reduce it to the rules of art. "The Sublime (say they) is born within us, and is not to be learned by precept. The only art to reach it, is, to have the power from nature. And (as they reason) those effects, which should be purely natural, are

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[1] In all the editions is added *η βαθους, or the profound:* a perplexing expression, and which perhaps gave rise to a treatise on the Bathos. It was purposely omitted in the translation, for this plain substantial reason, because I could not make sense of it. I have since been favoured with a sight of the learned Dr. Tonstal's conjectural emendations on this Author, and here for *βαθους* he readeth *παθους*. The minute alteration of a single letter enlightens and clears the whole passage: the context, the whole tenor of the piece, justifies the emendation. I beg leave therefore to give the following new version of the passage:—"But we ought not to advance, before we clear the point, whether or no there be any art in the Sublime or the Pathetic. For some are entirely of opinion, that they are guilty of a great mistake, who would reduce them to the rules of art. These high attainments (say they) are born within us, and are not to be learned by precept: the only art to reach them, is to have the power from nature."

dispirited and weakened by the dry impoverishing rules of art."

But I maintain, that the contrary might easily appear, would they only reflect that—[2] though nature for the most part challenges a sovereign and uncontrollable power in the Pathetic and Sublime, yet she is not altoge-

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[2] These observations of Longinus, and the following lines of Mr. Pope, are a very proper illustration for one another:

First follow nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same:
Unerring nature, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchang'd, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of art.
Art from that fund each just supply provides,
Works without show, and without pomp presides:
In some fair body thus the secret soul
With spirits feeds, with vigour fills the whole;
Each motion guides, and every nerve sustains,
Itself unseen, but in th' effect remains.
There are, whom Heav'n has bless'd with store of wit,
Yet want as much again to manage it;
For wit and judgment ever are at strife,
Though meant each other's aid, like man and wife.
'Tis more to guide, than spur the muse's steed,
Restrain his fury, than provoke his speed;
The winged courser, like a generous horse,
Shews most true mettle when you check his course.

Essay on Criticism.

ther lawless, but delights in a proper regulation. That again—though she is the foundation, and even the source of all degrees of the Sublime, yet that method is able to point out in the clearest manner the peculiar tendencies of each, and to mark the proper seasons in which they ought to be enforced and applied. And further—that flights of grandeur are then in the utmost danger, when left at random to themselves, having no ballast properly to poise, no helm to guide their course, but cumbered with their own weight, and bold without discretion. Genius may sometimes want the spur, but it stands as frequently in need of the curb.

Demosthenes somewhere judiciously observes, "That in common life success is the greatest good; that the next, and no less important, is conduct, without which the other must be unavoidably of short continuance." Now the same may be asserted of Composition, where nature will supply the place of success, and art the place of conduct.

But further, there is one thing which deserves particular attention. For though it must be owned, that there is a force in eloquence, which depends not upon, nor can be learned by, rule, yet even this could not be

known without that light which we receive from art. If, therefore, as I said before, he who condemns such works as this in which I am now engaged, would attend to these reflections, I have very good reason to believe he would no longer think any undertaking of this nature superfluous or useless.

SECTION III.

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Let them the chimney's flashing flames repel.
Could but these eyes one lurking wretch arrest,
I'd whirl aloft one streaming curl of flame,
And into embers turn his crackling dome.
But now a generous song I have not sounded.

Streaming curls of flame, spewing against heaven, and [2] *making Boreas a piper*, with

[1] Here is a great defect; but it is evident that the Author is treating of those imperfections which are opposite to the true Sublime, and among those, of extravagant swelling or bombast, an example of which he produces from some old tragic poet, none of whose lines, except these here quoted, and some expressions below, remain at present.

[2] "*Making Boreas a piper.*"] Shakespeare has fallen into the same kind of bombast:

——the southern wind
Doth play the trumpet to his purposes.
First Part of Henry IV.

such-like expressions, are not tragical, but super-tragical. For those forced and unnatural images corrupt and debase the style, and cannot possibly adorn or raise it; and whenever carefully examined in the light, their show of being terrible gradually disappears, and they become contemptible and ridiculous. Tragedy will indeed by its nature admit of some pompous and magnificent swellings, yet even in tragedy it is an unpardonable offence to soar too high; much less allowable must it therefore be in prose-writing, or those works which are founded in truth. Upon this account some expressions of [3] Gorgias the Leontine are highly ridiculed,

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[3] Gorgias the Leontine, or of Leontium, was a Sicilian rhetorician, and father of the Sophists. He was in such universal esteem throughout Greece, that a statue was erected to his honour in the temple of Apollo at Delphos, of solid gold, though the custom had been only to gild them. His styling Xerxes the Persian Jupiter, it is thought, may be defended from the custom of the Persians to salute their monarch by that high title. Calling vultures *living sepulchres*, has been more severely censured by Hermogenes than Longinus. The authors of such quaint expressions (as he says) deserve themselves to be buried in such tombs. It is certain that writers of great reputation have used allusions of the same nature. Dr. Pearce has produced instances from Ovid, and even from Cicero; and observed further, that Gregory Nazianzen has

who styles Xerxes the Persian Jupiter, and calls vultures *living sepulchres*. Some expressions of [4] Callisthenes deserve the same treatment, for they shine not like stars, but glare like meteors. And [5] Clitarchus comes under this censure still more, who blusters indeed, and blows, as Sophocles expresses it,

Loud sounding blasts not sweetened by the stop.

[6] Amphicrates, [7] Hegesias, and [8] Matris,

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styled those wild beasts that devour men, *running sepulchres*. However, at best they are but conceits, with which little wits in all ages will be delighted, the great may accidentally slip into, and such as men of true judgment may overlook, but will hardly commend.

[4] Callisthenes succeeded Aristotle in the tuition of Alexander the Great, and wrote a history of the affairs of Greece.

[5] Clitarchus wrote an account of the exploits of Alexander the Great, having attended him in his expeditions. Demetrius Phalereus, in his treatise on Elocution, has censured his swelling description of a wasp. "It feeds (says he) upon the mountains, and flies into hollow oaks." It seems as if he was speaking of a wild bull, or the boar of Erymanthus, and not of such a pitiful creature as a wasp. And for this reason, says Demetrius, the description is cold and disagreeable.

[6] Amphicrates was an Athenian orator. Being banished to Seleucia, and requested to set up a school there, he replied, with arrogance and disdain, that "The dish was not large enough for dolphins."——*Dr. Pearce.*

[7] Hegesias was a Magnesian. Cicero, in his Orator, c. 226, says humorously of him, "He is faulty no less in his

may all be taxed with the same imperfections. For often, when, in their own opinion, they are all Divine, what they imagine to be god-like spirit, proves empty simple froth.[9]

Bombast however is amongst those faults which are most difficult to be avoided. All

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thoughts than his expressions, so that no one who has any knowledge of him need ever be at a loss for a man to call *impertinent*." One of his frigid expressions is still remaining. Alexander was born the same night that the temple of Diana at Ephesus, the finest edifice in the world, was by a terrible fire reduced to ashes. Hegesias, in a panegyrical declamation on Alexander the Great, attempted thus to turn that accident to his honour: "No wonder (said he) that Diana's temple was consumed by so terrible a conflagration: the goddess was so taken up in assisting at Olinthia's delivery of Alexander, that she had no leisure to extinguish the flames which were destroying her temple." "The coldness of this expression (says Plutarch in Alex.) is so excessively great, that it seems sufficient of itself to have extinguished the fire of the temple."

I wonder Plutarch, who has given so little quarter to Hegesias, has himself escaped censure, till Dr. Pearce took cognizance of him. "Dulness (says he) is sometimes infectious; for while Plutarch is censuring Hegesias, he falls into his very character."

[8] Who Matris was I cannot find, but commentators observe from Athenæus, that he wrote in prose an Encomium upon Hercules.

[9] Vid. Cic. l. 4. Rhetoricorum, p. 97. ed. Delph. vol. 1. What is said there about the *Sufflata constructio verborum*, agrees very exactly with Longinus's sense of the bombast.

men are naturally biassed to aim at grandeur. Hence it is, that by shunning with the utmost diligence the censure of impotence and phlegm, they are hurried into the contrary extreme. They are mindful of the maxim, that

In great attempts 'tis glorious ev'n to fall.

But tumours in writing, as well as in the human body, are certain disorders. Empty and veiled over with superficial bigness, they only delude, and work effects contrary to those for which they were designed. "Nothing," according to the old saying, "is drier than a person distempered with a dropsy."

Now the only failure in this swoln and puffed-up style is, that it endeavours to go beyond the true Sublime, whereas Puerilities are directly opposite to it. They are low and grovelling, meanly and faintly expressed, and in a word are the most ungenerous and unpardonable errors that an author can be guilty of.

But what do we mean by a Puerility? Why, it is certainly no more than a schoolboy's thought, which, by too eager a pursuit of elegance, becomes dry and insipid. And those persons commonly fail in this particular,

who, by an ill-managed zeal for a neat, correct, and, above all, a sweet style, are hurried into low turns of expression, into a heavy and nauseous affectation.

To these may be added a third sort of imperfection in the Pathetic, which [10] THEODORUS has named the Parenthyrse, or an ill-timed emotion. It is an unnecessary attempt to work upon the passions, where there is no need of a Pathos; or some excess, where moderation is requisite. For several authors, of no sober understandings, are excessively fond of passionate expressions, which bear no relation at all to their subject, but are whims of their own, or borrowed from the schools. The consequence is, they meet with nothing but contempt and derision from their unaffected audience. And it is what they deserve, since they force themselves into transport and emotion, whilst their audience is calm, sedate, and unmoved. But I must reserve the Pathetic for another place.

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[10] Theodorus is thought to have been born at Gadara, and to have taught at Rhodes. Tiberius Cæsar, according to Quinctilian, is reported to have heard him with application, during his retirement in that island.—*Langbaine.*

SECTION IV.

[1] TIMÆUS abounds very much in the Frigid, the other vice of which I am speaking; a writer, it is true, sufficiently skilled in other points, and who sometimes reaches the genuine Sublime. He was indeed a person of a ready invention, polite learning, and a great fertility and strength of thought. But these qualifications are, in a great measure, clouded by the propensity he has to blazon the imperfections of others, and a wilful blindness in regard to his own; though a fond desire of new thoughts and uncommon turns has often plunged him into shameful Puerilities. The truth of these assertions I shall confirm by one or two instances alone, since Cecilius has already given us a larger number.

When he commends Alexander the Great, he tells us, "that he conquered all Asia in

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[1] Timæus was a Sicilian historian. Cicero has sketched a short character of him in his Orator, *l.* 2. *c.* 14. which agrees very well with the favourable part of that which is drawn in this Section. But Longinus takes notice further of his severity to others, which even drew upon him the surname of Epitimæus, from the Greek επιτιμαν, because he was continually chiding and finding fault.

fewer years than Isocrates was composing his Panegyric." A wonderful parallel indeed, between the conqueror of the world and a professor of rhetoric! By your method of computation, Timæus, the Lacedemonians fall vastly short of Isocrates, in expedition; for they spent thirty years in the siege of Messene, he only ten in writing that Panegyric!

But how does he inveigh against those Athenians who were made prisoners after the defeat in Sicily! "Guilty (says he) of sacrilege against Hermes, and having defaced his images, they were now severely punished; and what is somewhat extraordinary, by Hermocrates the son of Hermon, who was paternally descended from the injured deity." Really, my TERENTIANUS, I am surprised that he has not passed the same censure on Dionysius the tyrant; "who, for his heinous impiety towards Jupiter (or Dia) and Hercules (Heraclea), was dethroned by Dion and Heraclides."

Why should I dwell any longer upon Timæus, when even the very heroes of good writing, Xenophon and Plato, though educated in the school of Socrates, sometimes forget themselves, and transgress through an affectation of such pretty flourishes? The

former, in his Polity of the Lacedemonians, speaks thus: "They observe an uninterrupted silence, and keep their eyes as fixed and unmoved, as if they were so many statues of stone or brass. You might with reason think them more modest [2] than the [3] virgins in their eyes." Amphicrates might, perhaps, be allowed to use the term of *modest virgins* for the *pupils of the eye;* but what an indecency is it in the great Xenophon? And what a

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[2] "Than the virgins in their eyes."] Xenophon, in this passage, is shewing the care which that excellent lawgiver Lycurgus took to accustom the Spartan youth to a grave and modest behaviour. He enjoined them, whenever they appeared in public, "to cover their arms with their gown, to walk silently, to keep their eyes from wandering, by looking always directly before them." Hence it was, that they differed from statues only in their motion. But undoubtedly that turn upon the word κορη, here blamed by Longinus, would be a great blemish to this fine piece, if it were justly chargeable on the author. But Longinus must needs have made use of a very incorrect copy, which, by an unpardonable blunder, had εν τοις οφθαλμοις instead of εν τοις θαλαμοις, as it stands now in the best editions, particularly that at Paris by H. Stephens. This quite removes the cold and insipid turn, and restores a sense which is worthy of Xenophon: "You would think them more modest in their whole behaviour, than virgins in the bridal bed."

[3] The word κορη, signifying both a *virgin* and the *pupil of the eye,* has given occasion for these cold insipid turns.

strange persuasion, that the pupils of the eye should be in general the seats of modesty, when impudence is no where more visible than in the eyes of some? Homer, for instance, calls a person,

Drunkard! thou dog in eye! *

Timæus, as if he had found a treasure, could not pass by this insipid turn of Xenophon without imitation. Accordingly he speaks thus of Agathocles: "He ravished his own cousin, though married to another person, and on [4] the very day when she was first seen by her husband without a veil; a crime, of which none but he who had prostitutes, not virgins, in his eyes, could be guilty." Neither is the divine Plato to be acquitted of this failure, when he says, for instance; "After they are

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* Iliad. l. 1. v. 225.

[4] "The very day when—a veil."] All this is implied in the word ανακαλυπτηριων. It was the custom throughout Greece, and the Grecian colonies, for the unmarried women never to appear in public, or to converse with men, without a veil. The second or third day after marriage, it was usual for the bridegroom to make presents to his bride, which were called ανακαλυπτηρια, for then she immediately unveiled, and liberty was given him to converse freely with her ever after.

See Potter's Antiquities, v. ii. p. 294-5.

written, they deposit in the temples these cypress memorials."* And in another passage; "As to the walls, Megillus, I join in the opinion of Sparta, to let them sleep supine on the earth, and not to rouse them up."† Neither does an expression of Herodotus fall short of it,[5] when he calls beautiful women, "the pains of the eye."‡ Though this indeed may admit of some excuse, since in his history it is spoken by drunken barbarians. But neither in such a case, is it prudent to hazard the censure of posterity, rather than pass over a pretty conceit.

SECTION V.

All these and such-like indecencies in composition take their rise from the same ori-

* Plato 5. Legum. † Plato 6. Legum.

[5] "When he calls—of the eye."] The critics are strangely divided about the justice of this remark. Authorities are urged, and parallel expressions quoted on both sides. Longinus blames it, but afterwards candidly alleges the only plea which can be urged in its favour, that it was said by drunken barbarians. And who, but such sots, would have given the most delightful objects in nature so rude and uncivil an appellation? I appeal to the ladies for the propriety of this observation.

‡ Herod. Terpsichore, c. 18.

ginal; I mean that eager pursuit of uncommon turns of thought, which almost infatuates the writers of the present age. For our excellences and defects flow almost from the same common source. So that those correct and elegant, those pompous and beautiful expressions, of which good writing chiefly consists, are frequently so distorted as to become the unlucky causes and foundations of opposite blemishes. This is manifest in hyperboles and plurals; but the danger attending an injudicious use of these figures, I shall discover in the sequel of this work. At present it is incumbent upon me to inquire, by what means we may be enabled to avoid those vices, which border so near upon, and are so easily blended with, the true Sublime.

SECTION VI.

This indeed may be easily learned, if we can gain a thorough insight and penetration into the nature of the true Sublime, which, to speak truly, is by no means an easy, or a ready acquisition. To pass a right judgment upon composition is generally the effect of a

long experience, and the last improvement of study and observation. But however, to speak in the way of encouragement, a more expeditious method to form our taste, may perhaps, by the assistance of Rules, be successfully attempted.

SECTION VII.

You cannot be ignorant, my dearest friend, that in common life there is nothing great, a contempt of which shews a greatness of soul. So riches, honours, titles, crowns, and whatever is veiled over with a theatrical splendour, and a gaudy outside, can never be regarded as intrinsically good, in the opinion of a wise man, since by despising such things no little glory is acquired. For the persons who have ability sufficient to acquire, but through an inward generosity scorn such acquisitions, are more admired than those who actually possess them.

In the same manner we must judge of whatever looks great both in poetry and prose. We must carefully examine whether it be not only appearance. We must divest it of all

superficial pomp and garnish. If it cannot stand this trial, without doubt it is only swelled and puffed up, and it will be more for our honour to contemn than to admire it. [1] For the mind is naturally elevated by the true Sublime, and so sensibly affected with its lively strokes, that it swells in transport and an inward pride, as if what was only heard had been the product of its own invention.

He therefore who has a competent share of natural and acquired taste, may easily discover the value of any performance from a bare recital of it. If he finds that it transports not his soul, nor exalts his thoughts; that it calls not up into his mind ideas more enlarged than what the mere sounds of the words convey, but on attentive examination its dignity lessens and declines; he may conclude, that whatever pierces no deeper than the ears, can never be the true Sublime. [2] That

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[1] It is remarked in the notes to Boileau's translation, that the great Prince of Condé, upon hearing this passage, cried out, *Voilà le Sublime! voilà son véritable caractere!*

[2] "This is a very fine description of the Sublime, and finer still, because it is very sublime itself. But it is only a description; and it does not appear that Longinus intended, any where in this Treatise, to give an exact definition of it. The reason is, because he wrote after Cecilius, who (as he

on the contrary is grand and lofty, which the more we consider, the greater ideas we conceive of it; whose force we cannot possibly withstand; which immediately sinks deep, and makes such impressions on the mind as

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tells us) had employed all his book, in defining and shewing what the Sublime is. But since this book of Cecilius is lost, I believe it will not be amiss to venture here a definition of it my own way, which may give at least an imperfect idea of it. This is the manner in which I think it may be defined. The Sublime is a certain force in discourse, proper to elevate and transport the soul; and which proceeds either from grandeur of thought and nobleness of sentiment, or from magnificence of words, or an harmonious, lively, and animated turn of expression; that is to say, from any one of these particulars regarded separately, or, what makes the perfect Sublime, from these three particulars joined together."

Thus far are Boileau's own words in his twelfth reflection on Longinus, where, to illustrate the preceding definition, he subjoins an example from Racine's Athalie, or Abner, of these three particular qualifications of sublimity joined together. One of the principal officers of the court of Judah represents to Jehoiada, the high-priest, the excessive rage of Athaliah against him and all the Levites; adding, that, in his opinion, the haughty Princess would in a short time come and attack God even in his sanctuary. To this the high-priest, not in the least moved, answers:

Celui qui met un frein a la fureur des flots,
Sait aussi des mechans arreter les complots,
Soumis avec respect a sa volonte sainte,
Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre crainte.

cannot be easily worn out or effaced. In a word, you may pronounce that sublime, beautiful, and genuine, which always pleases, and takes equally with all sorts of men. For when persons of different humours, ages, professions, and inclinations, agree in the same joint approbation of any performance; then this union of assent, this combination of so many different judgments, stamps a high and indisputable value on that performance, which meets with such general applause.

SECTION VIII.

THERE are, if I may so express it, five very copious sources of the Sublime, if we presuppose an ability of speaking well, as a common foundation for these five sorts, and indeed without it, any thing besides will avail but little.

I. The *first* and most excellent of these is a boldness and grandeur in the Thoughts, as I have shewn in my Essay on Xenophon.

II. The *second* is called the Pathetic, or the power of raising the passions to a violent and even enthusiastic degree; and these two being genuine constituents of the Sublime,

are the gifts of nature, whereas the other sorts depend in some measure upon art.

III. The *third* consists in a skilful application of Figures, which are twofold, of sentiment and language.

IV. The *fourth* is a noble and graceful manner of Expression, which is not only to choose out significant and elegant words, but also to adorn and embellish the style, by the assistance of Tropes.

V. The *fifth* source of the Sublime, which completes all the preceding, is the Structure or composition of all the periods, in all possible dignity and grandeur.

I proceed next to consider each of these sources apart; but must first observe, that, of the *five*, Cecilius has wholly omitted the Pathetic. Now, if he looked upon the Grand and Pathetic as including one another, and in effect the same, he was under a mistake. For [1] some passions are vastly distant from

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1 "Some passions are vastly distant," &c.] The pathetic without grandeur is preferable to that which is great without passion. Whenever both unite, the passage will be excellent; and there is more of this in the book of Job, than in any other composition in the world. Longinus has here quoted a fine instance of the latter from Homer, but has produced none of the former, or the pathetic without grandeur.

grandeur, and are in themselves of a low degree; as lamentation, sorrow, fear; and on

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When a writer applies to the more tender passions of love and pity, when a speaker endeavours to engage our affections, or gain our esteem, he may succeed well, though there be nothing grand in what he says. Nay, grandeur would sometimes be unseasonable in such cases, as it strikes always at the imagination.

There is a deal of this sort of Pathetic in the words of our Saviour to the poor Jews, who were imposed upon and deluded into fatal errors by the Scribes and Pharisees, who had long been guilty of the heaviest oppression on the minds of the people: (Matt. xi. 28—30.) "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

So again in Matt. xxiii. 37. after taking notice of the cruelties, inhumanities, and murders, which the Jewish nation had been guilty of towards those who had exhorted them to repentance, or would have recalled them from their blindness and superstition to the practice of real religion and virtue, he on a sudden breaks off with,

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

The expression here is vulgar and common, the allusion to the hen taken from an object which is daily before our eyes, and yet there is as much tenderness and significance in it as can any where be found in the same compass.

I beg leave to observe farther, that there is a continued strain

the contrary,[2] there are many things grand and lofty without any passion; as, among a thousand instances, we may see, from what [3] the poet has said, with so much boldness, of the Aloides:*

——————— [4] to raise
Huge Ossa on Olympus' top they strove,
And place on Ossa Pelion with its grove;
That heaven itself, thus climb'd, might be assail'd.

But the boldness of what he afterwards adds is yet greater:

Nor would success their bold attempts have fail'd, &c.

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of this sort of Pathetic in St. Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian elders in Acts xx. What an effect it had upon his audience is plain from ver. 36—38. It is scarcely possible to read it seriously without tears.

[2] The first book of Paradise Lost is a continued instance of Sublimity without Passion. The descriptions of Satan and the other fallen angels are very grand, but terrible. They do not so much exalt as terrify the imagination. See Mr. Addison's observations, Spectator, No. 339.

[3] "The poet."] Longinus, as well as many other writers, frequently styles Homer in an eminent manner, *the poet,* as if none but he had deserved that title.

* Odyss. λ. v. 314.

[4] Milton has equalled, if not excelled, these bold lines of Homer in his fight of angels. See Mr. Addison's fine observations upon it, Spectator, No. 333.

Among the orators, all panegyrics, and orations composed for pomp and show, may be grand throughout, but yet are for the most part void of passion. So that those orators, who excel in the Pathetic, scarcely ever succeed as panegyrists; and those whose talents lie chiefly at Panegyric, are very seldom able to affect the passions. But, on the other hand, if Cecilius was of opinion, that the Pathetic did not contribute to the Sublime, and on that account judged it not worth his mention, he is guilty of an unpardonable error. For I confidently aver, that nothing so much raises discourse, as a fine pathos seasonably applied. It animates a whole performance with uncommon life and spirit, and gives mere words the force (as it were) of inspiration.

PART I.

SECTION IX.

But though the first and most important of these divisions, I mean, Elevation of Thought, be rather a natural than an acquired qualification, yet we ought to spare no pains

to educate our souls to grandeur, and impregnate them with generous and enlarged ideas.

"But how," it will be asked, "can this be done?" Why, I have hinted in another place, that the Sublime is an image reflected from the inward greatness of the soul. Hence it comes to pass, that a naked thought without words challenges admiration, and strikes by its grandeur. Such is [1] the silence of Ajax

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[1] "The silence of Ajax," &c.] Dido in Virgil behaves with the same greatness and majesty as Homer's Ajax. He disdains the conversation of the man, who, to his thinking, had injuriously defrauded him of the arms of Achilles; and she scorns to hold conference with him, who, in her own opinion, had basely forsaken her; and, by her silent retreat, shews her resentment, and reprimands Æneas more than she could have done in a thousand words.

Illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat,
Nec magis incepto vultum sermone movetur,
Quam si dura silex, aut stet Marpesia cautes.
Tandem corripuit sese, atque inimica refugit
In nemus umbriferum.—— *Æn.* vi. *v.* 469.

Disdainfully she look'd; then turning round,
She fix'd her eyes unmov'd upon the ground,
And what he looks and swears, regards no more
Than the deaf rocks, when the loud billows roar.
But whirl'd away to shun his hateful sight,
Hid in the forest and the shades of night. *Dryden.*

The Pathetic, as well as the Grand, is expressed as strongly by silence, or a bare word, as in a number of periods. There

in the Odyssey, which is undoubtedly noble, and far above expression.

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is an admirable instance of it in Shakespeare's Julius Cæsar, Act 4. Sc. 4. The preceding scene is wrought up in a masterly manner: we see there, in the truest light, the noble and generous resentment of Brutus, and the hasty choler and as hasty repentance of Cassius. After the reconciliation, in the beginning of the next scene, Brutus addresses himself to Cassius.

Bru. O Cassius! I am sick of many griefs.

Cas. Of your philosophy you make no use,
If you give place to accidental evils.

Bru. No man bears sorrow better——Portia's dead.

Cas. Ha! Portia!——

Bru. She is dead.

Cas. How 'scap'd I killing when I cross'd you so?

The stroke is heavier, as it comes unexpected. The grief is abrupt, because it is inexpressible. The heart is melted in an instant, and tears will start at once in any audience that has generosity enough to be moved, or is capable of sorrow and pity.

When words are too weak, or colours too faint, to represent a Pathos, as the poet will be silent, so the painter will hide what he cannot shew. Timanthes, in his Sacrifice of Iphigenia, gave Calchas a sorrowful look; he then painted Ulysses more sorrowful; and afterwards her uncle Menelaus, with all the grief and concern in his countenance which his pencil was able to display. By this gradation he had exhausted the passion, and had no art left for the distress of her father Agamemnon, which required the strongest heightening of all. He therefore covered up his head in his garment, and left the spectator to imagine that excess of anguish which colours were unable to express.

To arrive at excellence like this, we must needs suppose that which is the cause of it; I mean, that an orator of the true genius must have no mean and ungenerous way of thinking. For it is impossible for those who have grovelling and servile ideas, or are engaged in the sordid pursuits of life, to produce any thing worthy of admiration, and the perusal of all posterity. Grand and sublime expressions must flow from them and them alone, whose conceptions are stored and big with greatness. And hence it is, that the greatest thoughts are always uttered by the greatest souls. When Parmenio cried, [2] "I would

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[2] "I would accept these proposals," &c.] There is a great gap in the original after these words. The sense has been supplied by the editors, from the well-known records of history. The proposals here mentioned were made to Alexander by Darius; and were no less than his own daughter, and half his kingdom, to purchase peace. They would have contented Parmenio, but were quite too small for the extensive views of his master.

Dr. Pearce, in his note to this passage, has instanced a brave reply of Iphicrates. When he appeared to answer an accusation preferred against him by Aristophon, he demanded of him, "Whether he would have betrayed his country for a sum of money?" Aristophon replied in the negative. "Have I then done," cried Iphicrates, "what even you would have scorned to do?"

accept these proposals, if I was Alexander;" Alexander made this noble reply, "And so would I, if I was Parmenio." His answer shewed the greatness of his mind.

So [3] the space between heaven and earth marks out the vast reach and capacity of Homer's ideas, when he says,*

[4] While scarce the skies her horrid head can bound,
She stalks on earth.————*Mr. Pope.*

There is the same evidence of a generous heart, in the Prince of Orange's reply to the Duke of Buckingham, who, to incline him to an inglorious peace with the French, demanded, what he could do in that desperate situation of himself and his country? "Not to live to see its ruin, but die in the last dike."

These short replies have more force, shew a greater soul, and make deeper impressions, than the most laboured discourses. The soul seems to rouse and collect itself, and then darts forth at once in the noblest and most conspicuous point of view.

[3] Longinus here sets out in all the pomp and spirit of Homer. How vast is the reach of man's imagination! and what a vast idea, "The space between heaven and earth," is here placed before it! Dr. Pearce has taken notice of such a thought in the Wisdom of Solomon: "Thy almighty Word leaped down—it touched the heaven, but it stood upon the earth." Chap. xviii. 15, 16.

* Iliad. δ. v. 443.

[4] See the note to this description of Discord, in Mr. Pope's translation. Virgil has copied it *verbatim*, but applied it to Fame:—

This description may with more justice be applied to Homer's genius than the extent of discord.

But what disparity, what a fall there is in [5] Hesiod's description of melancholy,

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Ingrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit.

Soon grows the pigmy to gigantic size,
Her feet on earth, her forehead in the skies.

Shakespeare, without any imitation of these great masters, has, by the natural strength of his own genius, described the extent of Slander in the greatest pomp of expression, elevation of thought, and fertility of invention:

——————————Slander,
Whose head is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
Out-venoms all the worms of Nile, whose breath
Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie
All corners of the world. Kings, queens, and states,
Maids, matrons, nay the secrets of the grave,
This viperous slander enters.——*Cymbeline.*

And Milton's description of Satan, when he prepares for the combat, is (according to Mr. Addison, Spectator, No. 321.) equally sublime with either the description of Discord in Homer, or that of Fame in Virgil:

———— Satan alarm'd,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood
Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd:
His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
Sat horror plum'd.——

[5] The image of Hesiod, here blamed by Longinus, is borrowed from low life, and has something in it exceedingly nasty. It offends the stomach, and of course cannot be approved by

if the poem of the Shield may be ascribed to him!

A filthy moisture from her nostrils flow'd.*

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the judgment. This brings to my remembrance the conduct of Milton, in his description of Sin and Death, who are set off in the most horrible deformity. In that of Sin, there is indeed something loathsome; and what ought to be painted in that manner sooner than Sin? Yet the circumstances are picked out with the nicest skill, and raise a national abhorrence of such hideous objects.—

The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
Voluminous and vast! a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal: Yet when they list would creep,
If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still bark'd, and howl'd
Within, unseen.———

Of Death he says,

———black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
And shook a dreadful dart.———

But Milton's judiciousness in selecting such circumstances as tend to raise a just and natural aversion, is no where more visible than in his description of a lazar-house, Book 11th. An inferior genius might have amused himself, with expatiating on the filthy and nauseous objects abounding in so horrible a scene, and written perhaps like a surgeon rather than a poet.

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* Hesiod. in Scuto Herc. v. 267.

He has not represented his image terrible, but loathsome and nauseous.

But Milton aims only at the passions, by shewing the miseries entailed upon man, in the most affecting manner, and exciting at once our horror at the woes of the afflicted, and a generous sympathy in all their afflictions.

——————Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark, &c.

It is too long to quote, but the whole is exceedingly poetic; the latter part of it sublime, solemn, and touching. We startle and groan at this scene of miseries, in which the whole race of mankind is perpetually involved, and of some of which we ourselves must one day be victims.

Sight so deform, what heart of rock could long
Dry-ey'd behold!———

To return to the remark. There is a serious turn, an inborn sedateness in the mind, which renders images of terror grateful and engaging. Agreeable sensations are not only produced by bright and lively objects, but sometimes by such as are gloomy and solemn. It is not the blue sky, the cheerful sunshine, or the smiling landskip, that give us all our pleasure, since we are indebted for no little share of it to the silent night, the distant howling wilderness, the melancholy grot, the dark wood, and hanging precipice. What is terrible, cannot be described too well; what is disagreeable should not be described at all, or at least should be strongly shaded. When Apelles drew the portrait of Antigonus, who had lost an eye, he judiciously took his face in profile, that he might hide the blemish. It is the art of the painter to please, and not to offend the sight. It is the poet's to make us sometimes thoughtful and sedate, but never to raise our distaste by foul and nauseous representations.

On the other hand, with what majesty and pomp does Homer exalt his deities!

> Far as a shepherd from some point on high
> O'er the wide main extends his boundless eye,
> Through such a space of air, with thund'ring sound,
> At one long leap th' immortal coursers bound.*
>
> *Mr. Pope.*

He measures the leap of the horses by the extent of the world. And who is there, that, considering the superlative magnificence of this thought, would not with good reason cry out, that "if the steeds of the Deity were to take a second leap, [6] the world itself would want room for it!"

How grand also and pompous are those descriptions of the combat of the gods![7]

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* Iliad. ε. v. 770.

[6] It is highly worthy of remark, how Longinus seems here inspired with the genius of Homer. He not only approves and admires this Divine thought of the poet, but imitates, I had almost said, improves and raises it. The space which Homer assigns to every leap of the horses, is equal to that which the eye will run over when a spectator is placed upon a lofty eminence, and looks towards the sea, where there is nothing to obstruct the prospect. This is sufficiently great; but Longinus has said what is greater than this, for he bounds not the leap by the reach of the sight, but boldly avers, that the whole extent of the world would not afford room enough for two such leaps.—*Dr. Pearce.*

[7] Milton's description of the fight of angels is well able to

Heav'n in loud thunders bids the trumpet sound,
And wide beneath them groans the rending ground.*

Deep in the dismal regions of the dead
Th' infernal monarch rear'd his horrid head;

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stand a parallel with the combat of the gods in Homer. His Venus and Mars make a ludicrous sort of appearance, after their defeat by Diomed. The engagement between Juno and Latona has a little of the air of burlesque. His commentators indeed labour heartily in his defence, and discover fine allegories under these sallies of his fancy. This may satisfy them, but is by no means a sufficient excuse for the poet. Homer's excellences are indeed so many and so great, that they easily incline us to grow fond of those few blemishes which are discernible in his poems, and to contend that he is broad awake, when he is actually nodding. But let us return to Milton, and take notice of the following lines:

——Now storming fury rose
And clamour, such as heard in heav'n, till now,
Was never; arms on armour clashing bray'd
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots rag'd: dire was the noise
Of conflict! over head the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming vollies flew,
And flying vaulted either host with fire.
So under fiery cope together rush'd
Both battles main, with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage: all heav'n
Resounded; and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her centre shook.——

The thought of "fiery arches being drawn over the armies by the flight of flaming arrows," may give us some idea of Mil-

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* Iliad. ϕ. ver. 388.

Leap'd from his throne, lest Neptune's arm should lay
His dark dominions open to the day,
And pour in light on Pluto's drear abodes,
Abhorr'd by men, and dreadful ev'n to gods.*

Mr. Pope.

What a prospect is here, my friend![8] The earth laid open to its centre; Tartarus itself disclosed to view; the whole world in commotion, and tottering on its basis! and what is more, heaven and hell, things mortal and immortal, all combating together, and sharing the danger of this important battle! But yet, these bold representations, if not allegorically

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ton's lively imagination; as the last thought, which is superlatively great, of the reach of his genius:

——and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her centre shook.

He seems apprehensive, that the mind of his readers was not stocked enough with ideas, to enable them to form a notion of this battle; and to raise it the more, recals to their remembrance the time, or that part of infinite duration in which it was fought, before time was, when this visible creation existed only in the prescience of God.

* Iliad. *v.* ver. 61.

[8] That magnificent description of the combat of the gods, cannot possibly be expressed or displayed in more concise, more clear, or more sublime terms, than *here* in Longinus. This is the excellence of a true critic, to be able to discern the excellences of his author, and to display his own in illustrating them.—*Dr. Pearce.*

understood, are downright blasphemy, and extravagantly shocking.[9] For Homer, in my opinion, when he gives us a detail of the wounds, the seditions, the punishments, imprisonments, tears of the deities, with those evils of every kind under which they languish, has to the utmost of his power exalted his heroes, who fought at Troy, into gods, and degraded his gods into men. Nay, he makes their condition worse than human; for when man is overwhelmed in misfortunes, death affords a comfortable port, and rescues him from misery. But he represents the infelicity of the gods as everlasting as their nature.

And how far does he excel those descriptions of the combats of the gods, when he sets a deity in his true light, and paints him in all his majesty, grandeur, and perfection; as in that description of Neptune,

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[9] Plutarch, in his treatise *on reading the poets,* is of the same opinion with Longinus: "When you read (says he) in Homer, of gods thrown out of heaven by one another, or of gods wounded by, quarrelling with, and snarling at, one another, you may with reason say,

> Here had thy fancy glow'd with usual heat,
> Thy gods had shonemore uniformly great."

which has been already applauded by several writers:

[10] Fierce as he pass'd the lofty mountains nod,
The forests shake, earth trembled as he trod,
And felt the footsteps of th' immortal god.

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[10] The Deity is described, in a thousand passages of Scripture, in greater majesty, pomp, and perfection, than that in which Homer arrays *his* gods. The books of Psalms and of Job abound in such Divine descriptions. That particularly in the 18th Psalm, ver. 7—10, is inimitably grand:

"Then the earth shook and trembled, the foundations also of the hills moved, and were shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled at it. He bowed the heavens also and came down, and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly, and came flying upon the wings of the wind."

So again, Psalm lxxvii. 16—19.

"The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, and were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water, the air thundered, and thine arrows went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was heard round about; the lightnings shone upon the ground, the earth was moved and shook withal. Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in great waters, and thy footsteps are not known."

And in general, wherever there is any description of the works of Omnipotence, or the excellence of the Divine Being, the same vein of sublimity is always to be discerned. I beg the reader to peruse in this view the following Psalms, xlvi. lxviii. lxxvi. xcvi. xcvii. civ. cxiv. cxxxix. cxlviii. as also chapter iii. of Habakkuk, and the description of the Son of God in the book of Revelation, chap. xix. 11—17.

His whirling wheels the glassy surface sweep;
Th' enormous monsters rolling o'er the deep,
Gambol around him on the wat'ry way,
And heavy whales in awkward measures play;
The sea subsiding spreads a level plain,
Exults and owns the monarch of the main:
The parting waves before his coursers fly;
The wond'ring waters leave the axle dry.*

Mr. Pope.

[11] So likewise the Jewish legislator, no ordi-

Copying such sublime images in the poetical parts of Scripture, and heating his imagination with the combat of the gods in Homer, has made Milton succeed so well in his fight of angels. If Homer deserves such vast encomiums from the critics, for describing Neptune with so much pomp and magnificence, how can we sufficiently admire those Divine descriptions which Milton gives of the Messiah?

He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire thron'd,
Illustrious far and wide.———
Before him pow'r Divine his way prepar'd;
At his command th' up-rooted hills retir'd
Each to his place, they heard his voice and went
Obsequious: Heav'n his wonted face renewed,
And with fresh flowrets hill and valley smil'd.

* Iliad. γ. ver. 18—27.

[11] This Divine passage has furnished a handle for many of those who are willing to be thought critics, to shew their pertness and stupidity at once. Though bright as the light of which it speaks, they are blind to its lustre, and will not discern its Sublimity. Some pretend that Longinus never saw

nary person, having conceived a just idea of the power of God, has nobly expressed it

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this passage, though he has actually quoted it; and that he never read Moses, though he has left so candid an acknowledgment of his merit. In such company, some, no doubt, will be surprised to find the names of Huet and Le Clerc. They have examined, taken to pieces, and sifted it as long as they were able, yet still they cannot find it Sublime. It is simple, say they, and therefore not grand. They have read it by a law of Horace misunderstood, and therefore condemn it.

Boileau undertook its defence, and has gallantly performed it. He shews them, that Simplicity of expression is so far from being opposed to Sublimity, that it is frequently the cause and foundation of it; (and indeed there is not a page in Scripture which abounds not with instances to strengthen this remark.) Horace's law, that a *beginning should be unadorned*, does not by any means forbid it to be grand, since grandeur consists not in ornament and dress. He then shews at large, that whatever noble and majestic expression, elevation of thought, and importance of event, can contribute to Sublimity, may be found united in this passage. Whoever has the curiosity to see the particulars of this dispute, may find it in the edition of Boileau's works, in four volumes 12mo.

It is however remarkable, that though Monsieur Huet will not allow the Sublimity of this passage in Moses, yet he extols the following in the 33d Psalm: "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."

There is a particularity in the manner of quoting this passage by Longinus, which I think has hitherto escaped observation. "God said—*What?*—Let there be light," &c. That interrogation between the narrative part and the words of the Almighty himself, carries with it an air of reverence and vene-

in the beginning of his Law.* "And God said,—*What?*—Let there be light, and there was light. Let the earth be, and the earth was."

I hope my friend will not think me tedious, if I add another quotation from the poet, in regard to his mortals; that you may see how he accustoms us to mount along with him to heroic grandeur. A thick and impenetrable cloud of darkness had on a sudden enveloped the Grecian army, and suspended the battle. Ajax, perplexed what course to take, prays thus:†

Accept a warrior's pray'r, eternal Jove;
This cloud of darkness from the Greeks remove;

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ration. It seems designed to awaken the reader, and raise his awful attention to the voice of the great Creator.

Instances of this majestic simplicity and unaffected grandeur, are to be met with in great plenty through the Sacred Writings. Such as St. John xi. 43. "Lazarus, come forth." St. Matt. viii. 3. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."—"I will; be thou clean." And St. Mark iv. 39. where Christ hushes the tumultuous sea into a calm, with "Peace (or rather, be silent), be still." The waters (says a critic, Sacred Classics, p. 325.) heard that voice, which commanded universal nature into being. They sunk at his command, who has the sole privilege of saying to that unruly element, "Hitherto shalt thou pass, and no farther: here shall thy proud waves be stopped."

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* Gen. i. 3. † Iliad. ρ. ver. 645.

Give us but light, and let us see our foes,
We'll bravely fall, though Jove himself oppose.

The sentiments of Ajax are here pathetically expressed: it is Ajax himself. He begs not for life; a request like that would be beneath a hero. But because in that darkness he could display his valour in no illustrious exploit, and his great heart was unable to brook a sluggish inactivity in the field of action, he only prays for light, not doubting to crown his fall with some notable performance, though Jove himself should oppose his efforts. Here Homer, like a brisk and favourable gale, renews and swells the fury of the battle; he is as warm and impetuous as his heroes are, or (as he says of Hector)

With such a furious rage his steps advance,
As when the god of battles shakes his lance,
Or baleful flames on some thick forest cast,
Swift marching lay the wooded mountain waste:
Around his mouth a foamy moisture stands.*

Yet Homer himself shews in the Odyssey (what I am going to add is necessary on several accounts), that when a great genius is in decline, a fondness for the fabulous clings fast to age. Many arguments may be brought to

* Iliad, *o*. ver. 605.

prove that this poem was written after the Iliad; but this especially, that in the Odyssey he has occasionally mentioned the sequel of those calamities, which began at Troy, as so many episodes of that fatal war; and that he introduces those terrible dangers and horrid disasters, as formerly undergone by his heroes. For, in reality, the Odyssey is no more than the epilogue of the Iliad :

> There warlike Ajax, there Achilles lies,
> Patroclus there, a man divinely wise;
> There too my dearest son.*

It proceeds, I suppose, from the same reason, that having written the Iliad in the youth and vigour of his genius, he has furnished it with continued scenes of action and combat; whereas the greatest part of the Odyssey is spent in narration, the delight of old age. [12] So that, in the Odyssey, Homer may with

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* Odyss. γ. ver. 109.

[12] Never did any criticism equal, much less exceed, this of Longinus in sublimity. He gives his opinion, that Homer's Odyssey, being the work of his old age, and written in the decline of his life, and in every respect equal to the Iliad, except in violence and impetuosity, may be resembled to "the setting sun, whose grandeur continues the same, though its rays retain not the same fervent heat." Let us here take a view of Longinus, whilst he points out the beauties of the best writers,

justice be resembled to the setting sun, whose grandeur still remains, without the meridian

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and at the same time his own. Equal himself to the most celebrated authors, he gives them the eulogies due to their merit. He not only judges his predecessors by the true laws and standard of good writing, but leaves posterity in himself a model and pattern of genius and judgment.—*Dr. Pearce.*

This fine comparison of Homer to the sun, is certainly an honour to poet and critic. It is a fine resemblance, great, beautiful, and just. He describes Homer in the same elevation of thought, as Homer himself would have set off his heroes. Fine genius will shew its spirit, and in every age and climate displays its natural inherent vigour. This remark will, I hope, be a proper introduction to the following lines of Milton, where grandeur, impaired and in decay, is described by an allusion to the sun in eclipse, by which our ideas are wonderfully raised to a conception of what it was in all its glory:

——————— He, above the rest,
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tow'r: his form not yet had lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of glory obscur'd: as when the sun new-ris'n
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs; darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all th' archangel.———

That horrible grandeur in which Milton arrays his devils throughout his poem, is an honourable proof of the stretch of his invention, and the solidity of his judgment. Tasso, in his

heat of his beams. The style is not so grand and majestic as that of the Iliad; the sublimity not continued with so much spirit, nor so uniformly noble; the tides of passion flow not along with so much profusion, nor do they hurry away the reader in so rapid a current. There is not the same volubility and quick variation of the phrase; nor is the work embellished with so many strong and expressive images. Yet, like the ocean, whose very shores, when deserted by the tide, mark out how wide it sometimes flows, so Homer's genius, when ebbing into all those fabulous and incredible ramblings of Ulysses, shews plainly how sublime it once had been. Not that I am forgetful of those storms, which are de-

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4th canto, has opened a council of devils; but his description of them is frivolous and puerile, savouring too much of old women's tales, and the fantastic dreams of ignorance. He makes some of them walk upon the feet of beasts, and dresses out their resemblance of a human head with twisting serpents instead of hair; horns sprout upon their foreheads, and after them they drag an immense length of tail. It is true, when he makes his Pluto speak (for he has made use of the old poetical names), he supports his character with a deal of spirit, and puts such words and sentiments into his mouth as are properly diabolical. His devil talks somewhat like Milton's, but looks not with half that horrible pomp, that height of obscured glory.

scribed in so terrible a manner in several parts of the Odyssey; of Ulysses' adventures with the Cyclop, and some other instances of the true sublime. No; I am speaking, indeed, of old age, but it is the old age of Homer. However, it is evident, from the whole series of the Odyssey, that there is far more narration in it than action.

I have digressed thus far merely for the sake of shewing, that, in the decline of their vigour, the greatest geniuses are apt to turn aside unto trifles. Those stories of shutting up the winds in a bag; of the men in Circe's island metamorphosed into swine, whom [13]Zoilus calls *little squeaking pigs;* of Jupiter's being nursed by the doves like one of their young; of Ulysses in a wreck, when he took no sustenance for ten days; and those incredible absurdities concerning the death of the suitors: all these are undeniable instances of

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[13] "Zoilus."] The most infamous name of a certain author, of Thracian extraction, who wrote a treatise against the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer, and entitled it, Homer's Reprimand: which so exasperated the people of that age, that they put the author to death, and sacrificed him as it were to the injured genius of Homer. His enterprise was certainly too daring, his punishment undoubtedly too severe.——*Dr. Pearce.*

this in the Odyssey. [14] Dreams indeed they are, but such as even Jove might dream.

Accept, my friend, in further excuse of this digression, my desire of convincing you, that a decrease of the Pathetic in great orators and poets often ends in the [15] moral kind

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[14] After Longinus had thus summed up the imperfections of Homer, one might imagine, from the usual bitterness of critics, that a heavy censure would immediately follow. But the true critic knows how to pardon, to excuse, and to extenuate. Such conduct is uncommon, but just. We see by it at once the worth of the author, and the candour of the judge. With persons of so generous a bent, his Translator has fared as well as Homer. Mr. Pope's "faults (in that performance) are the faults of a man, but his beauties are the beauties of an angel."——*Essay on the Odyssey.*

[15] The word *moral* does not fully give the idea of the original word ἦθος, but our language will not furnish any other that comes so near it. The meaning of the passage is, that great authors, in the youth and fire of their genius, abound chiefly in such passions as are strong and vehement; but in their old age and decline, they betake themselves to such as are mild, peaceable, and sedate. At first they endeavour to move, to warm, to transport; but afterwards to amuse, delight, and persuade. In youth, they strike at the imagination; in age, they speak more to our reason. For though the passions are the same in their nature, yet, at different ages, they differ in degree. Love, for instance, is a violent, hot, and impetuous passion; Esteem is a sedate, and cool, and peaceable affection of the mind. The youthful fits and transports of the former, in progress of time, subside and settle in the latter. So

of writing. Thus the Odyssey, furnishing us with rules of morality, drawn from that course of life which the suitors led in the palace of Ulysses, has in some degrees the air of a comedy, where the various manners of men are ingeniously and faithfully described.

SECTION X.

Let us consider next, whether we cannot find out some other means to infuse sublimity into our writings. Now, as there are no subjects which are not attended by some adherent circumstances, an accurate and judicious

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a storm is different from a gale, though both are wind. Hence it is, that bold scenes of action, dreadful alarms, affecting images of terror, and such violent turns of passion, as require a stretch of fancy to express or to conceive, employ the vigour and maturity of youth, in which consists the nature of the Pathetic; but amusing narrations, calm descriptions, delightful landskips, and more even and peaceable affections, are agreeable in the ebb of life, and therefore more frequently attempted, and more successfully expressed by a declining genius. This is the moral kind of writing here mentioned, and by these particulars is Homer's Odyssey distinguished from his Iliad. The παθος and ηθος so frequently used, and so important in the Greek critics, are fully explained by Quinctilian, in the sixth book of his Institut. Orat.

choice of the most suitable of these circumstances, and an ingenious and skilful connexion of them into one body, must necessarily produce the Sublime. For what by the judicious choice, and what by the skilful connexion, they cannot but very much affect the imagination.

Sappho is an instance of this; who, having observed the anxieties and tortures inseparable to jealous love, has collected and displayed them all with the most lively exactness. But in what particular has she shewn her excellence? In selecting those circumstances which suit best with her subject, and afterwards connecting them together with so much art.

Blest as th' immortal gods is he,
The youth who fondly sits by thee,
And hears, and sees thee all the while
Softly speak, and sweetly smile.

'Twas this depriv'd my soul of rest,
And rais'd such tumults in my breast;
For while I gaz'd, in transport tost,
My breath was gone, my voice was lost.

My bosom glow'd; the subtile flame
Ran quick through all my vital frame;
O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung;
My ears with hollow murmurs rung.

In dewy damps my limbs were chill'd;
My blood with gentle horrors thrill'd;
My feeble pulse forgot to play,
I fainted, sunk, and died away.[1]

Philips.

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[1] There is a line at the end of this Ode of Sappho in the original, which is taken no notice of in the translation, because the sense is complete without it, and if admitted, it would throw confusion on the whole.

The title of this Ode in Ursinus, in the fragments of Sappho, is, *To the beloved Fair;* and it is the *right*. For Plutarch (to omit the testimonies of many others), in his Eroticon, has these words: "The beautiful Sappho says, that at sight of her beloved fair, her voice was suppressed," &c. Besides, Strabo and Athenæus tells us, that the name of this fair one was Dorica, and that she was loved by Charaxus, Sappho's brother. Let us then suppose that this Dorica, Sappho's infamous paramour, receives the addresses of Charaxus, and admits him into her company as her lover. This very moment Sappho unexpectedly enters, and stricken at what she sees, feels tormenting emotions. In this Ode, therefore, she endeavours to express that wrath, jealousy, and anguish, which distracted her with such variety of torture. This, in my opinion, is the subject of the Ode. And whoever joins in my sentiments, cannot but disapprove the following verses in the French translation by Boileau:

—dans les doux transports où s'égare mon ame:

And,

Je tombe dans des douces langueurs.

The word *doux* will in no wise express the rage and distraction of Sappho's mind. It is always used in a contrary sense.

Are you not amazed, my friend, to find how in the same moment she is at a loss for her

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Catullus has translated this Ode almost verbally, and Lucretius has imitated it in his third book.—*Dr. Pearce.*

The English translation I have borrowed from the Spectator, No. 229. It was done by Mr. Philips, and has been very much applauded, though the following line,

For while I gaz'd, in transport tost,

and this,

My blood with gentle horrors thrill'd,

will be liable to the same censure with Boileau's *douces langueurs.*

A critique on this Ode may be seen in the same Spectator. It has been admired in all ages, and besides the imitation of it by Catullus and Lucretius, a great resemblance of it is easily perceivable in Horace's Ode to Lydia, lib. 1. od. 13. and in Virgil's Æneid, lib. 4.

Longinus attributes its beauty to the judicious choice of those circumstances which are the constant, though surprising attendants upon love. It is certainly a passion that has more prevalent sensations of pleasure and pain, and affects the mind with a greater diversity of impressions, than any other.

Love is a smoke, rais'd with the fume of sight;
Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes:
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
What is it else? a madness most discreet,
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet.
Shakespeare, in Romeo and Juliet.

The qualities of love are certainly very proper for the management of a good poet. It is a subject on which many may

soul, her body, her ears, her tongue, her eyes, her colour, all of them as much absent from

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shine in different lights, yet keep clear of all that whining and rant with which the stage is continually pestered. The ancients have scarcely meddled with it in any of their tragedies. Shakespeare has shewn it, in almost all its degrees, by different characters in one or other of his plays. Otway has wrought it up finely in the Orphan, to raise our pity. Dryden expresses its thoughtless violence very well, in his All for Love. Mr. Addison has painted it both successful and unfortunate, with the highest judgment, in his Cato. But Adam and Eve, in Milton, are the finest picture of conjugal love that ever was drawn. In them it is true warmth of affection, without the violence or fury of passion; a sweet and reasonable tenderness, without any cloying or insipid fondness. In its serenity and sunshine, it is noble, amiable, endearing, and innocent. When it jars and goes out of tune, as on some occasions it will, there is anger and resentment. He is gloomy, she complains and weeps, yet love has still its force. Eve knows how to submit, and Adam to forgive. We are pleased that they have quarrelled, when we see the agreeable manner in which they are reconciled. They have enjoyed prosperity, and will share adversity together. And the last scene in which we behold this unfortunate couple, is when

> They hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,
> Through Eden take their solitary way.

Tasso, in his Gierusalemme Liberata, has lost no opportunity of embellishing his poem with some incidents of this passion. He even breaks in upon the rules of Epic, by introducing the episode of Olindo and Sophronia, in his 2d canto: for *they* never appear again in the poem, and have no share in the action of it. Two of his great personages are a husband and

her, as if they had never belonged to her? And what contrary effects does she feel together? She glows, she chills, she raves, she reasons; now she is in tumults, and now she is dying away. In a word, she seems not to be attacked by one alone, but by a combination of the most violent passions.

All the symptoms of this kind are true effects of jealous love; but the excellence of this Ode, as I observed before, consists in the judicious choice and connexion of the most notable circumstances. And it proceeds from his due application of the most formidable incidents, that the poet excels so much in describing tempests. The [2] author of the

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wife, who fight always side by side, and die together. The power, the allurements, the tyranny of beauty, is amply displayed in the coquettish character of Armida, in the 4th canto. He indeed always shews the effects of the passion in true colours; but then he does more, he refines and plays upon them with fine-spun conceits. He flourishes like Ovid on every little incident, and recals our attention from the poem, to take notice of the poet's wit. This might be writing in the Italian taste, but it is not nature. Homer was above it, in his fine characters of Hector and Andromache, Ulysses and Penelope. The judicious Virgil has rejected it, in his natural picture of Dido. Milton has followed and improved upon his great masters, with dignity and judgment.

[2] Aristæus, the Proconnesian, is said to have wrote a poem,

poem on the Arimaspians doubts not but these lines are great and full of terror:

> Ye pow'rs, what madness! How on ships so frail
> (Tremendous thought!) can thoughtless mortals sail?
> For stormy seas they quit the pleasing plain,
> Plant woods in waves, and dwell amidst the main.
> Far o'er the deep (a trackless path) they go,
> And wander oceans in pursuit of woe.
> No ease their hearts, no rest their eyes can find,
> On heav'n their looks, and on the waves their mind;
> Sunk are their spirits, while their arms they rear,
> And gods are wearied with their fruitless pray'r.
>
> *Mr. Pope.*

Every impartial reader will discern that these lines are florid more than terrible. But how does Homer raise a description, to mention only *one* example amongst a thousand!

> ——[3] He bursts upon them all:
> Bursts as a wave that from the cloud impends,
> And swell'd with tempests on the ship descends;
> White are the decks with foam; the winds aloud
> Howl o'er the masts, and sing through every shroud:

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called Αριμασπεια; or, of the affairs of the Arimaspians, a Scythian people, situated far from any sea. The lines here quoted seem to be spoken by an Arimaspian, wondering how men dare trust themselves in ships, and endeavouring to describe the seamen in the extremities of a storm.——*Dr. Pearce.*

[3] There is a description of a tempest in the 107th Psalm, which runs in a very high vein of sublimity, and has more

Pale, trembling, tir'd, the sailors freeze with fears,
And instant death on ev'ry wave appears.*
Mr. Pope.

spirit in it than the applauded descriptions in the authors of antiquity; because when the storm is in all its rage, and the danger become extreme, almighty power is introduced to calm at once the roaring main, and give preservation to the miserable distressed. It ends in that fervency of devotion, which such grand occurrences are fitted to raise in the minds of the thoughtful.

"He commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted away because of trouble. They reel to and fro like a drunken man, and are at their wit's-end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad, because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh! that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

Shakespeare has, with inimitable art, made use of a storm in his tragedy of King Lear, and continued it through seven scenes. In reading it, one sees the piteous condition of those who are exposed to it in open air; one almost hears the wind and thunder, and beholds the flashes of lightning. The anger, fury, and passionate exclamations of Lear himself, seem to rival the storm, which is as outrageous in his breast, inflamed and ulcerated by the barbarities of his daughters, as in the elements themselves. We view him

Contending with the fretful elements,
Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea,

* Iliad. o. ver. 624.

Aratus has attempted a refinement upon the last thought, and turned it thus,

A slender plank preserves them from their fate. *

Or swell the curled waters 'bove the main,
That things might change or cease : tears his white hair,
Which the impetuous blasts with eyeless rage
Catch in their fury.——

We afterwards see the distressed old man exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather; nature itself in hurry and disorder, but he as violent and boisterous as the storm :

Rumble thy belly-full, spit fire, spout rain ;
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters ;
I tax not you, ye elements !——

And immediately after,

———Let the great gods,
That keep this dreadful thund'ring o'er our heads,
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,
That hast within thee undivulged crimes
Unwhipt of justice. Hide thee, thou bloody hand,
Thou perjur'd, and thou simular man of virtue,
That art incestuous : caitiff, shake to pieces,
That under covert and convenient seeming
Hast practis'd on man's life. Close pent-up guilts,
Rive your concealing continents, and ask
These dreadful summoners grace.——

The storm still continues, and the poor old man is forced along the open heath, to take shelter in a wretched hovel. There the poet has laid new incidents, to stamp fresh terror on the imagination, by lodging Edgar in it before them. The

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* Arati Phænomen. ver. 299.

But instead of increasing the terror, he only lessens and refines it away; and besides, he sets a bound to the impending danger, by saying, "a plank preserves them," thus banishing their despair. But the poet is so far from confining the danger of his sailors, that he paints them in a most desperate situation, while they are only not swallowed up in every

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passions of the old king are so turbulent, that he will not be persuaded to take any refuge. When honest Kent entreats him to go in, he cries,

> Prithee go in thyself, seek thy own ease;
> This tempest will not give me leave to ponder
> On things would hurt me more——
> Nay, get thee in; I'll pray, and then I'll sleep——
> Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
> That 'bide the pelting of this pitiless storm!
> How shall your houseless heads, and unfed sides,
> Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
> From seasons such as these?—Oh! I have ta'en
> Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp,
> Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
> That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
> And shew the heav'ns more just.——

The miseries and disorders of Lear and Edgar are then painted with such judicious horror, that every imagination must be strongly affected by such tempests in reason and nature. I have quoted those passages which have the moral reflections in them, since they add solemnity to the terror, and alarm at once a variety of passions.

wave, and have death before their eyes as fast as they escape it. [4] Nay more, the danger is discerned in the very hurry and confusion of the words; the verses are tossed up and down with the ship, the harshness and jarring of the syllables give us a lively image of the storm, and the whole description is in itself a terrible and furious tempest.

It is by the same method that Archilochus has succeeded so well in describing a wreck; and Demosthenes, where he relates * the con-

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[4] "Nay more, the danger," &c.—] I have given this sentence such a turn as I thought would be most suitable to our language, and have omitted the following words, which occur in the original: "Besides, he has forcibly united some prepositions that are naturally averse to union, and heaped them one upon another, ὑπ' ἐκ θανατοιο. By this means the danger is discerned," &c.

The beauty Longinus here commends in Homer, of making the words correspond with the sense, is one of the most excellent that can be found in composition. The many and refined observations of this nature in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, are an evidence how exceedingly fond the ancients were of it. There should be a style of sound as well as of words, but such a style depends on a great command of language, and a musical ear. We see a great deal of it in Milton, but in Mr. Pope it appears to perfection. It would be folly to quote examples, since they can possibly escape none who can read and hear.

* Orat. de Corona.

fusions at Athens, upon arrival of ill news.[5] "It was (says he) in the evening," &c. If I may speak by a figure, they reviewed the forces of their subjects, and culled out the flower of them, with this caution, not to place any mean, or indecent, or coarse expression in so choice a body. For such expressions are like mere patches, or unsightly bits of matter, which in this edifice of grandeur entirely confound the fine proportions, mar

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[5] The whole passage in Demosthenes' oration runs thus:

"It was evening when a courier brought the news to the magistrates of the surprisal of Elatea. Immediately they arose, though in the midst of their repast. Some of them hurried away to the Forum, and driving the tradesmen out, set fire to their shops. Others fled to advertise the commanders of the army of the news, and to summon the public herald. The whole city was full of tumult. On the morrow, by break of day, the magistrates convene the senate. You, gentlemen, obeyed the summons. Before the public council proceeded to debate, the people took their seats above. When the senate were come in, the magistrates laid open the reasons of their meeting, and produced the courier. He confirmed their report. The herald demanded aloud, Who would harangue? Nobody rose up. The herald repeated the question several times. In vain: nobody rose up: nobody harangued; though all the commanders of the army were there, though the orators were present, though the common voice of our country joined in the petition, and demanded an oration for the public safety."

the symmetry, and deform the beauty of the whole.

SECTION XI.

THERE is another virtue bearing great affinity to the former, which they call Amplification; whenever (the topics on which we write or debate, admitting of several beginnings, and several pauses in the periods) the great incidents, heaped one upon another, ascend by a continued gradation to a summit of grandeur.[1] Now this may be done to

[1] Lucan has put a very grand amplification in the mouth of Cato:

> Estne dei sedes, nisi terra, et pontus, et aer,
> Et cœlum, et virtus? Superos quid quærimus ultra?
> Jupiter est, quodcunque vides, quocunque movebis.

There is a very beautiful one in Archbishop Tillotson's 12th sermon:—

"'Tis pleasant to be virtuous and good, because that is to excel many others: 'Tis pleasant to grow better, because that is to excel ourselves: Nay, 'tis pleasant even to mortify and subdue our lusts, because that is victory: 'Tis pleasant to command our appetites and passions, and to keep them in due order, within the bounds of reason and religion, because this is empire."

ennoble what is familiar, to aggravate what is wrong, to increase the strength of arguments, to set actions in their true light, or skilfully to manage a passion, and a thousand ways besides. But the orator must never forget this maxim, that in things however amplified, there cannot be perfection, without a sentiment which is truly Sublime, unless when we are to move compassion, or to make things appear as vile and contemptible. But in all other methods of Amplification, if you take away the sublime meaning, you separate as it were the soul from the body. For no sooner are they deprived of this necessary support, but they grow dull and languid, lose all their vigour and nerves.

What I have said now differs from what went immediately before. My design was then to shew how much a judicious choice and an artful connexion of proper incidents heighten a subject. But in what manner this

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But no author amplifies in so noble a manner as St. Paul. He rises gradually from earth to heaven, from mortal man to God himself. "For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come: all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."—1 Cor. iii. 21—23. See also Rom. viii. 29, 30. 38, 39.

sort of Sublimity differs from Amplification, will soon appear by exactly defining the true notion of the latter.

SECTION XII.

I CAN by no means approve of the definition which writers of rhetoric give of Amplification. "Amplification (say they) is a form of words aggrandizing the subject." Now this definition may equally serve for the Sublime, the Pathetic, and the application of Tropes; for these also invest discourse with peculiar airs of grandeur. In my opinion, they differ in these respects: Sublimity consists in loftiness, but Amplification in number; whence the former is often visible in one single thought; the other cannot be discerned, but in a series and chain of thoughts rising one upon another.

"Amplification therefore (to give an exact idea of it), is such a full and complete connexion of all the particular circumstances inherent in the things themselves, as gives them additional strength, by dwelling some time upon, and progressively heightening a

particular point." It differs from Proof in a material article, since the end of a Proof is to establish the matter in debate * * * *

[The remainder of the Author's remarks on Amplification is lost. What comes next is imperfect; but it is evident from what follows, that Longinus is drawing a parallel between Plato and Demosthenes.] * * * *(Plato)* may be compared to the ocean, whose waters, when hurried on by the tide, overflow their ordinary bounds, and are diffused into a vast extent. And in my opinion, this is the cause that the orator *(Demosthenes)*, striking with more powerful might at the passions, is inflamed with fervent vehemence, and passionate ardour; whilst Plato, always grave, sedate, and majestic, though he never was cold or flat, yet fell vastly short of the impetuous thundering of the other.

And it is in the same points, my dear TERENTIANUS, that Cicero and Demosthenes (if we Grecians may be admitted to speak our opinions), differ in the Sublime. The one is at the same time grand and concise, the other grand and diffusive. Our Demosthenes, uttering every sentence with such force, precipitation, strength, and vehemence, that it seems to be all fire, and bears down every

thing before it, may justly be resembled to a thunderbolt, or a hurricane. But Cicero, like a wide conflagration, devours and spreads on all sides; his flames are numerous, and their heat is lasting; they break out at different times in different quarters, and are nourished up to a raging violence by successive additions of proper fuel. I must not however pretend to judge in this case so well as you. But the true season of applying so forcible and intense a Sublime as that of Demosthenes, is, in the strong efforts of discourse, in vehement attacks upon the passions, and whenever the audience are to be stricken at once, and thrown into consternation. And recourse must be had to such diffusive eloquence as that of Cicero, when they are to be soothed and brought over by gentle and soft insinuation. Besides, this diffuse kind of eloquence is most proper for all familiar topics; for perorations, digressions, for easy narrations or pompous amusements, for history, for short accounts of the operations of nature, and many other sorts.

SECTION XIII.

[1] To leave this digression. Though Plato's style particularly excels in smoothness, and an easy and peaceable flow of the words, yet neither does it want an elevation and grandeur[2]: and of this you cannot be ignorant,

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[1] "To leave this digression."] These words refer to what Longinus had said of Plato in that part of the preceding Section, which is now almost wholly lost: and from hence it is abundantly evident, that the person whom he had there compared with the orator was Plato.—*Dr. Pearce.*

[2] That Archbishop Tillotson was possessed, in an eminent degree, of the same sweetness, fluency of style, and elevated sense, which are so much admired in Plato, can be denied by none who are versed in the writings of that author. The following passage, on much the same subject as the instance here quoted by our Critic from Plato, may be of service in strengthening this assertion: he is speaking of persons deeply plunged in sin:—

"If consideration," says he, "happen to take them at any advantage, and they are so hard pressed by it that they cannot escape the sight of their own condition; yet they find themselves so miserably entangled and hampered in an evil course, and bound so fast in chains of their own wickedness, that they know not how to get loose. Sin is the saddest slavery in the world; it breaks and sinks men's spirits, and makes them so base and servile, that they have not the courage to rescue themselves. No sort of slaves are so poor-spirited as they that are in bondage to their lusts. Their power is gone; or if they

as you have read the following passage in his Republic.* "Those wretches (says he) who never have experienced the sweets of wisdom and virtue, but spend all their time in revels and debauches, sink downwards day after day, and make their whole life one continued series of errors. They never have the courage to lift the eye upwards towards truth, they never felt any the least inclination to it. They taste no real or substantial pleasure; but resembling so many brutes, with eyes always fixed on the earth, and intent upon their loaden tables, they pamper themselves up in luxury and excess. So that hurried on by their voracious and insatiable appetites, they are continually running and kicking at one another with hoofs and horns of steel, and are embrued in perpetual slaughter."

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have any left, they have not the heart to make use of it. And though they see and feel their misery, yet they choose rather to sit down in it, and tamely to submit to it, than to make any resolute attempts for their liberty." And afterwards—"Blind and miserable men! that, in despite of all the merciful warnings of God's word and providence, will run themselves into this desperate state, and never think of returning to a better mind till their retreat is difficult, almost to an impossibility."—*29th Sermon, Vol. I. folio.*

* Plato, lib. 9. de Rep. p. 586. edit. Steph.

This excellent writer, if we can but resolve to follow his guidance, opens here before us another path, besides those already mentioned, which will carry to the true Sublime. —And what is this path?—Why, an imitation and emulation of the greatest orators and poets that ever flourished. And let this, my friend, be our ambition; be this the fixed and lasting scope of all our labours.

For hence it is, that numbers of imitators are ravished and transported by a spirit not their own, [3]like the Pythian Priestess, when she approaches the sacred tripod. There is, if Fame speaks true, a chasm in the earth, *from whence exhale Divine evaporations*, which

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[3] This parallel or comparison drawn between the Pythian Priestess of Apollo and imitators of the best authors, is happily invented, and quite complete. Nothing can be more beautiful, more analogous, more expressive. It was the custom for the Pythian to sit on the tripod, till she was rapt into Divine frenzy by the operation of effluvia issuing out of the clefts of the earth. In the same manner, says Longinus, they, who imitate the best writers, seem to be inspired by those whom they imitate, and to be actuated by their sublime spirit. In this comparison, those Divine writers are set on a level almost with the gods; they have equal power attributed to them with the deity presiding over oracles, and the effect of their operations on their imitators is honoured with the title of a Divine spirit. —*Dr. Pearce.*

impregnate her on a sudden with the inspiration of her god, and cause in her the utterance of oracles and predictions. So, from the sublime spirit of the ancients, there arise some fine effluvia, like vapours from the sacred vents, which work themselves insensibly into the breasts of imitators, and fill those, who naturally are not of a towering genius, with the lofty ideas and fire of others. Was Herodotus alone the constant imitator of Homer? No:[4] Stesichorus and Archilochus imitated him more than Herodotus; but Plato more than all of them; who, from the copious Homeric fountain, has drawn a thousand rivulets to cherish and improve his own productions. Perhaps there might be a necessity of my producing some examples of this had not Ammonius done it to my hand.

Nor is such proceeding to be looked upon as plagiarism, but, in methods consistent with the nicest honour, an imitation of the finest pieces, or copying out those bright ori-

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[4] Stesichorus, a noble poet, inventor of the Lyric Chorus, was born, according to Suidas, in the thirty-seventh Olympiad. Quinctilian, Instit. Orat. l. x. c. 1. says thus of him:—"If he had kept in due bounds, he seems to have been able to come the nearest to a rivalship with Homer."—*Dr. Pearce.*

ginals. Neither do I think that Plato would have so much embellished his philosophical tenets with the florid expressions of poetry, [5]had he not been ambitious of entering the lists, like a youthful champion, and ardently contending for the prize with Homer, who had a long time engrossed the admiration of the world. The attack was perhaps too rash, the opposition perhaps had too much the air

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[5] Plato, in his younger days, had an inclination to poetry, and made some attempts in tragedy and epic; but finding them unable to bear a parallel with the verses of Homer, he threw them into the fire, and abjured that sort of writing, in which he was convinced he must always remain an inferior: however, the style of his prose has a poetical sweetness, majesty, and elevation. Though he despaired of equalling Homer in his own way, yet he has nobly succeeded in another, and is justly esteemed the Homer of philosophers. Cicero was so great an admirer of him that he said, "If Jupiter conversed with men, he would talk in the language of Plato." It was a common report in the age he lived, that bees dropped honey on his lips as he lay in the cradle. And it is said, that, the night before he was placed under the tuition of Socrates, the philosopher dreamed he had embraced a young swan in his bosom; who, after his feathers were full grown, stretched out his wings, and soared to an immense height in the air, singing all the time with inexpressible sweetness. This shews at least what a great opinion they then entertained of his eloquence, since they thought its appearance worthy to be ushered into the world with omens and prognostics.

of enmity, but yet it could not fail of some advantage; for, as Hesiod says,*

Such brave contention works the good of men.

A greater prize than the glory and renown of the ancients can never be contended for, where victory crowns with never-dying applause; when even a defeat, in such a competition, is attended with honour.

SECTION XIV.

If ever therefore we are engaged in a work which requires a grandeur of style and exalted sentiments, would it not then be of use to raise in ourselves such reflections as these? —How in this case would Homer, or Plato, or Demosthenes, have raised their thoughts? Or if it be historical—how would Thucydides? For these celebrated persons, being proposed by us for our pattern and imitation, will in some degree lift up our souls to the standard of their own genius. It will be yet of greater use, if to the preceding reflections we add these—What would Homer or Demosthenes have thought of this piece? or what judgment would they have passed upon

* Hesiod. in operibus et diebus, ver. 24.

it? It is really a noble enterprise, to frame such a theatre and tribunal, to sit on our own compositions, and submit them to a scrutiny, in which such celebrated heroes must preside as our judges, and be at the same time our evidence. There is yet another motive which may yield most powerful incitements, if we ask ourselves—What character will posterity form of this work, and of me, the author? For if any one, in the moments of composing, apprehends that his performance may not be able to survive him, the productions of a soul, whose views are so short and confined, that it cannot promise itself the esteem and applause of succeeding ages, must needs be imperfect and abortive.

SECTION XV.

Visions, which by some are called Images, contribute very much, my dearest youth, to the weight, magnificence, and force of compositions. The name of an Image is generally given to any idea, however represented in the mind, which is communicable to others by discourse; but a more particular sense of it has now prevailed: "When

the imagination is so warmed and affected, that you seem to behold yourself the very things you are describing, and to display them to the life before the eyes of an audience."

You cannot be ignorant, that rhetorical and poetical images have a different intent. The design of a poetical image is surprise, that of a rhetorical is perspicuity. However, to move and strike the imagination is a design common to both.

[1] Pity thy offspring, mother, nor provoke
Those vengeful Furies to torment thy son.

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[1] Virgil refers to this passage in his fourth Æneid, ver. 470.

Aut Agamemnonius scenis agitatus Orestes,
Armatam facibus matrem et serpentibus atris
Cum fugit, ultricesque sedent in limine Diræ.

Or mad Orestes when his mother's ghost
Full in his face infernal torches toss'd,
And shook her snaky locks: he shuns the sight,
Flies o'er the stage, surpris'd with mortal fright,
The Furies guard the door, and intercept his flight.

Dryden.

"There is not (says Mr. Addison, Spectator, No. 421.) a sight in nature so mortifying as that of a distracted person, when his imagination is troubled, and his whole soul disordered and confused: Babylon in ruins is not so melancholy a spectacle."

The distraction of Orestes, after the murder of his mother, is a fine representation in Euripides, because it is natural. The

What horrid sights! how glare their bloody eyes!
How twisting snakes curl round their venom'd heads!

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consciousness of what he has done is uppermost in his thoughts, disorders his fancy, and confounds his reason. He is strongly apprehensive of Divine vengeance, and the violence of his fears places the avenging furies before his eyes. Whenever the mind is harassed by the stings of conscience, or the horrors of guilt, the senses are liable to infinite delusions, and startle at hideous imaginary monsters. The poet, who can touch such incidents with happy dexterity, and paint such images of consternation, will infallibly work on the minds of others. This is what Longinus commends in Euripides; and here it must be added, that no poet in this branch of writing can enter into a parallel with Shakespeare.

When Macbeth is preparing for the murder of Duncan, his imagination is big with the attempt, and is quite upon the rack. Within, his soul is dismayed with the horror of so black an enterprise; and every thing without looks dismal and affrighting. His eyes rebel against his reason, and make him start at images that have no reality.—

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle tow'rd my hand? come let me clutch thee!
I have thee not—and yet I see thee still.

He then endeavours to summon his reason to his aid, and convince himself that it is mere chimera; but in vain, the terror stamped on his imagination will not be shaken off:

I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.———

Here he makes a new attempt to reason himself out of the delusion, but it is quite too strong:—

———————— I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before.—There's no such thing.—

In deadly wrath the hissing monsters rise,
Forward they spring, dart out, and leap around me.*

And again:

Alas!—she'll kill me!—whither shall I fly?†

The delusion is described in so skilful a manner, that the audience cannot but share the consternation, and start at the visionary dagger.

The genius of the poet will appear more surprising, if we consider how the horror is continually worked up, by the method in which the perpetration of the murder is represented. The contrast between Macbeth and his wife is justly characterized, by the hard-hearted villany of the one, and the qualms of remorse in the other. The least noise, the very sound of their own voices, is shocking and frightful to both:

———Hark! peace!
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bell-man,
Which gives the stern'st good-night—he is about it.—

And again, immediately after,

——— Alack! I am afraid they have awak'd,
And 'tis not done: th' attempt, and not the deed,
Confounds us.—Hark!—I laid their daggers ready,
He could not miss them.———

The best way to commend it, as it deserves, would be to quote the whole scene. The fact is represented in the same affecting horror as would rise in the mind at sight of the actual commission. Every single image seems reality, and alarms the soul. They seize the whole attention, stiffen and benumb the sense, the very blood curdles and runs cold, through the strongest abhorrence and detestation of the crime.

* Euripid. Orest. ver. 255.

† Euripid. Iphigen. Taur. ver. 408.

The poet here actually saw the furies with the eyes of his imagination, and has compelled his audience to see what he beheld himself. Euripides therefore has laboured very much in his tragedies to describe the two passions of madness and love, and has succeeded much better in these than (if I am not mistaken) in any other. Sometimes, indeed, he boldly aims at Images of different kinds. For though his genius was not naturally great, yet in many instances he even forced it up to the true spirit of tragedy; and that he may always rise where his subject demands it (to borrow an allusion from the Poet)*

> Lash'd by his tail his heaving sides incite
> His courage, and provoke himself for fight.

The foregoing assertion is evident from that passage, where Sol delivers the reins of his chariot to Phaëton:

> [2] Drive on, but cautious shun the Lybian air;
> That hot unmoisten'd region of the sky
> Will drop thy chariot.——†

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* Iliad. *v.* ver. 170.

[2] This passage, in all probability, is taken from a tragedy of Euripides, named Phaëton, which is entirely lost. Ovid had

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† Two fragments of Euripides.

And a little after,

Thence let the Pleiads point thy wary course.
Thus spoke the god. Th' impatient youth with haste

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certainly an eye to it in his Met. l. ii. when he puts these lines into the mouth of Phœbus, resigning the chariot of the Sun to Phaëton :—

Zonarumque trium contentus fine, polumque
Effugit australem, junctamque aquilonibus arcton:
Hac sit iter: manifesta rotæ vestigia cernes.
Utque ferant æquos et cœlum et terra calores,
Nec preme, nec summum molire per æthera currum.
Altius egressus, cœlestia tecta cremabis ;
Inferius terras: medio tutissimus ibis.

Drive 'em not on directly through the skies,
But where the Zodiac's winding circle lies,
Along the midmost Zone ; but sally forth,
Nor to the distant South, nor stormy North,
The horses' hoofs a beaten track will shew :
But neither mount too high, nor sink too low ;
That no new fires or heav'n or earth infest ;
Keep the mid-way, the middle way is best. *Addison.*

The sublimity which Ovid here borrowed from Euripides he has diminished, almost vitiated, by flourishes. A sublimer image can no where be found than in the song of Deborah, after Sisera's defeat (Judges, v. 28—), where the vain-glorious boasts of Sisera's mother, when expecting his return, and, as she was confident, his victorious return, are described :

" The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming ? why tarry the wheels of his chariots ? Her wise ladies answered

Snatches the reins, and vaults into the seat.
He starts ; the coursers, whom the lashing whip
Excites, outstrip the winds, and whirl the car
High through the airy void. Behind, the sire,
Borne on his planetary steed, pursues
With eye intent, and warns him with his voice,
Drive there!—now here!—here! turn the chariot here!

Who would not say, that the soul of the poet mounted the chariot along with the rider, that it shared as well in danger as in rapidity of flight with the horses? For, had he not been hurried on with equal ardour through all this ethereal course, he could never have conceived so grand an image of it. There are some parallel Images in his [3] Cassandra :

Ye martial Trojans, &c.

Æschylus has made bold attempts in noble and truly heroic Images ; as, in one of his tragedies, the seven commanders against Thebes, without betraying the least sign of pity or regret, bind themselves by oath not to survive Eteocles :—

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her ; yea, she returned answer to herself: Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey? to every man a damsel or two ; to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needle-work, of divers colours of needle-work on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?"—*Dr. Pearce.*

[3] The Cassandra of Euripides is now entirely lost.

[4] The seven, a warlike leader each in chief,
Stood round; and o'er the brazen shield they slew
A sullen bull; then plunging deep their hands
Into the foaming gore, with oaths invok'd
Mars, and Enyo, and blood-thirsting terror.

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[4] The following Image in Milton is great and dreadful. The fallen angels, fired by the speech of their leader, are too violent to yield to his proposal in words, but assent in a manner that at once displays the art of the poet, gives the reader a terrible idea of the fallen angels, and imprints a dread and horror on the mind:

He spake; and to confirm his words, out flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim: the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell; highly they rag'd
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance tow'rd the vault of heav'n.

How vehemently does the fury of Northumberland exert itself in Shakespeare, when he hears of the death of his son Hotspur. The rage and distraction of the surviving father shews how important the son was in his opinion. Nothing must be, now he is not: nature itself must fall with Percy. His grief renders him frantic, his anger desperate:

Let heav'n kiss earth! now let not nature's hand
Keep the wild flood confin'd: let order die,
And let this world no longer be a stage
To feed contention in a ling'ring act:
But let one spirit of the first-born Cain
Reign in all bosoms, that each heart being set
On bloody courses, the rude scene may end,
And darkness be the burier of the dead.

Sometimes, indeed, the thoughts of this author are too gross, rough, and unpolished; yet Euripides himself, spurred on too fast by emulation, ventures even to the brink of like imperfections. In Æschylus the palace of Lycurgus is surprisingly affected by the sudden appearance of Bacchus:

> The frantic dome and roaring roofs convuls'd,
> Reel to and fro, instinct with rage divine.

Euripides has the same thought, but he has turned it with much more softness and propriety:

> The vocal mount in agitation shakes,[5]
> And echoes back the Bacchanalian cries.

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[5] Tollius is of opinion, that Longinus blames neither the thought of Euripides nor Æschylus, but only the word *βακχευει*, which, he says, has not so much sweetness, nor raises so nice an idea, as the word *συμβακχευει*. Dr. Pearce thinks Æschylus is censured for making the palace instinct with Bacchanalian fury, to which Euripides has given a softer and sweeter turn, by making the mountain only reflect the cries of the Bacchanals.

There is a daring image, with an expression of a harsh sound, on account of its antiquity, in Spenser's Fairy Queen, which may parallel that of Æschylus:

> She foul blasphemous speeches forth did cast,
> And bitter curses horrible to tell;
> That ev'n the temple wherein she was plac'd,
> Did quake to hear, and nigh asunder brast.

Sophocles has succeeded nobly in his Images, when he describes his Œdipus in all the agonies of approaching death, and burying himself in the midst of a prodigious tempest; when he gives us a sight of the [6] appari-

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Milton shews a greater boldness of fiction than either Euripides or Æschylus, and tempers it with the utmost propriety, when, at Adam's eating the forbidden fruit,

> Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
> In pangs, and nature gave a second groan;
> Sky lower'd, and mutt'ring thunder, some sad drops
> Wept, at completing of the mortal sin.

[6] The tragedy of Sophocles, where this apparition is described, is entirely lost. Dr. Pearce observes, that there is an unhappy imitation of it in the beginning of Seneca's Troades; and another in Ovid. Metam. lib. xiii. 441. neat without spirit, and elegant without grandeur.

Ghosts are very frequent in English tragedies; but ghosts, as well as fairies, seem to be the peculiar province of Shakespeare. In such circles none but he could move with dignity. That in Hamlet is introduced with the utmost solemnity, awful throughout, and majestic. At the appearance of Banquo in Macbeth (Act 3. Sc. 5.) the Images are set off in the strongest expression, and strike the imagination with high degrees of horror, which is supported with surprising art through the whole scene.

There is a fine touch of this nature in Job iv. 13. "In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake: then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not dis-

tion of Achilles upon his tomb, at the departure of the Greeks from Troy. But I know not whether any one has described that apparition more divinely than [7] Simonides. To quote all these instances at large would be endless.

To return: Images in poetry are pushed to a fabulous excess, quite surpassing the bounds of probability; whereas in oratory, their beauty consists in the most exact propriety and nicest truth: and sublime excursions are absurd and impertinent, when mingled with fiction and fable, where fancy sallies out into direct impossibilities. Yet to excesses like these, our able orators (kind Heaven make them really such!) are very much addicted. With the tragedians, they behold the tormenting furies, and with all their sagacity never find out, that when Orestes exclaims,*—

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cern the form thereof: an image—before mine eyes—silence —and I heard a voice,—Shall mortal man be more just than God?" &c. &c.

[7] Simonides the Ceian was a celebrated poet. Cicero, de Orat. l. 2. declares him the inventor of artificial memory: and Quinctilian, l. x. c. 1. gives him this commendation as a poet: "His excellency lay in moving compassion, so that some prefer him in this particular before all other writers."—— *Dr. Pearce.*

* Euripid. Orest. v. 264.

> Loose me, thou fury, let me go, torment'ress:
> Close you embrace, to plunge me headlong down
> Into th' abyss of Tartarus——

the Image had seized his fancy, because the mad fit was upon him, and he was actually raving.

What then is the true use of Images in Oratory? They are capable, in abundance of cases, to add both nerves and passion to our speeches. For if the Images be skilfully blended with the Proofs and Descriptions, they not only persuade, but subdue an audience. "If any one (says a great orator*) should hear a sudden outcry before the tribunal, whilst another brings the news that the prison is burst open and the captives escaped, no man, either young or old, would be of so abject a spirit as to deny his utmost assistance. But if amongst this hurry and confusion another should arrive, and cry out, This is the Author of these disorders—the miserable accused, unjudged and unsentenced, would perish on the spot."

So Hyperides, when he was accused of passing an illegal decree, for giving liberty to slaves, after the defeat of Chæronea; "It was

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* Demosth. Orat. contra Timocr. non procul a fine.

not an orator," said he, "that made this decree, but the battle of Chæronea." At the same time that he exhibits proofs of his legal proceedings, he intermixes an Image of the battle, and by that stroke of art, quite passes the bounds of mere persuasion. It is natural to us to hearken always to that which is extraordinary and surprising; whence it is, that we regard not the Proof so much as the grandeur and lustre of the Image, which quite eclipses the Proof itself. This bias of the mind has an easy solution; since, when two such things are blended together, the stronger will attract to itself all the virtue and efficacy of the weaker.

These observations will, I fancy, be sufficient, concerning that Sublime which belongs to the Sense, and takes its rise either from an Elevation of Thought, a choice and connexion of proper Incidents, Amplification, Imitation, or Images.

PART II.

THE Pathetic, which the Author, Sect. viii. laid down for the second source of the Sublime, is omitted here, because it was reserved for a distinct treatise.—*See Sect.* xliv. with the note.

PART III.

SECTION XVI.

THE topic that comes next in order, is that of Figures; for these, when judiciously used, conduce not a little to greatness. But since it would be tedious, if not infinite labour, exactly to describe all the species of them, I shall instance only some few of those which contribute most to the elevation of the style, on purpose to shew that we lay not a greater stress upon them than is really their due.

Demosthenes is producing proofs of his upright behaviour whilst in public employ. Now, which is the most natural method of doing this? ("You were not in the wrong, Athenians, when you courageously ventured your lives in fighting for the liberty and safety of Greece, of which you have domestic illustrious examples. For neither were they in the wrong who fought at Marathon, who fought at Salamis, who fought at Platææ.") Demosthenes takes another course, and filled as it were with sudden inspiration, and transported by a godlike warmth, he thunders out an oath by the champions of Greece; "You were not in the wrong, no, you were not, I swear, by those noble souls, who were so lavish of their lives in the field of Marathon,"* &c. He seems, by this figurative manner of swearing, which I call an Apostrophe, to have deified their noble ancestors; at the same time instructing them, that they ought to swear by persons, who fell so gloriously, as by so many gods. He stamps into the breasts of his judges the generous principles of those applauded patriots; and by transferring what was naturally a proof, into a

* Orat. de Corona, p. 124. ed. Oxon.

soaring strain of the Sublime and the Pathetic, strengthened by[1] such a solemn, such an unusual and reputable oath, he instils that balm into their minds, which heals every painful reflection, and assuages the smart of misfortune. He breathes new life into them by his artful encomiums, and teaches them to set as great a value on their unsuccessful engagement with Philip, as on the victories of Marathon and Salamis. In short, by the sole application of this Figure, he violently seizes the favour and attention of his audience, and compels them to acquiesce in the event, as they cannot blame the undertaking.

Some would insinuate, that the hint of this oath was taken from these lines of[2] Eupolis:

> No! by my labours in that glorious * field,
> Their joy shall not produce my discontent!

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[1] The observations on this oath are judicious and solid. But there is one infinitely more solemn and awful in Jeremiah xxii. 5.

"But if ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation."—See Genesis xxii. 16. and Hebrews vi. 13.

[2] Eupolis was an Athenian writer of comedy, of whom nothing remains at present, but the renown of his name.—*Dr. Pearce.*

* Marathon.

[3] But the grandeur consists not in the bare application of an oath, but in applying it in the proper place, in a pertinent manner, at the exactest time, and for the strongest reasons. Yet in Eupolis there is nothing but an oath, and that addressed to the Athenians, at a time they were flushed with conquest, and consequently did not require consolation. Besides, the poet did not swear by heroes, whom he had before deified himself, and thereby raise sentiments in the audience worthy of such virtue; but deviated from those illustrious souls, who ventured their lives for their country, to swear by an inanimate object, the battle. In Demosthenes, the oath is addressed to the vanquished, to the end that the defeat of Chæronea may be no longer regarded by the Athenians as a misfortune. It is at one time a clear demonstration that they had done their duty; it

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[3] This judgment is admirable, and Longinus alone says more than all the writers on rhetoric that ever examined this passage of Demosthenes. Quinctilian, indeed, was very sensible of the ridiculousness of using oaths, if they were not applied as happily as the orator has applied them; but he has not at the same time laid open the defects, which Longinus evidently discovers, in a bare examination of this oath in Eupolis.—*Dacier.*

gives occasion for an illustrious example; it is an oath artfully addressed, a just encomium and a moving exhortation. And whereas this objection might be thrown in his way, "You speak of a defeat partly occasioned by your own ill conduct, and then you swear by those celebrated victories;" the orator took care to weigh all his words in the balances of art, and thereby brings them off with security and honour. From which prudent conduct we may infer, that sobriety and moderation must be observed, in the warmest fits of fire and transport. In speaking of their ancestors, he says, "Those who so bravely exposed themselves to danger in the plains of Marathon, those who were in the naval engagements near Salamis and Artemisium, and those who fought at Platææ;" industriously suppressing the very mention of the events of those battles, because they were successful, and quite opposite to that of Chæronea. Upon which account he anticipates all objections, by immediately subjoining, "all whom, Æschines, the city honoured with a public funeral, not because they purchased victory with their lives, but because they lost those for their country,"

SECTION XVII.

I MUST not in this place, my friend, omit an observation of my own, which I will mention in the shortest manner: Figures naturally impart assistance to, and on the other side receive it again, in a wonderful manner, from sublime sentiments. And I will now shew where, and by what means, this is done.

A too frequent and elaborate application of Figures, carries with it a great suspicion of artifice, deceit, and fraud, especially when, in pleading, we speak before a judge, from whose sentence lies no appeal; and much more, if before a tyrant, a monarch, or any one invested with arbitrary power, or unbounded authority. For he grows immediately angry, if he thinks himself childishly amused, and attacked by the quirks and subtleties of a wily rhetorician. He regards the attempt as an insult and affront to his understanding, and sometimes breaks out into bitter indignation; and though perhaps he may suppress his wrath, and stifle his resentments for the present, yet he is averse, nay even

deaf, to the most plausible and persuasive arguments that can be alleged. Wherefore, a Figure is then most dexterously applied, when it cannot be discerned that it is a Figure.

Now a due mixture of the Sublime and Pathetic very much increases the force, and removes the suspicion, that commonly attends on the use of Figures. For veiled, as it were, and wrapt up in such beauty and grandeur, they seem to disappear, and securely defy discovery. I cannot produce a better example to strengthen this assertion, than the preceding from Demosthenes: "I swear by those noble souls," &c. For in what has the orator here concealed the Figure? Plainly, in its own lustre. For as the stars are quite dimmed and obscured, when the sun breaks out in all his blazing rays, so the artifices of rhetoric are entirely overshadowed by the superior splendour of sublime thoughts. A parallel illustration may be drawn from painting: for when several colours of light and shade are drawn upon the same surface, those of light seem not only to rise out of the piece, but even to lie much nearer to the sight. So the Sublime and Pathetic, either by means of a great affinity they bear to the springs

and movements of our souls, or by their own superlative lustre, always outshine the adjacent Figures, whose art they shadow, and whose appearance they cover, in a veil of superior beauties.

SECTION XVIII.

WHAT shall I say here of Question and Interrogation? [1]Is not discourse enlivened,

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[1] Deborah's words, in the person of Sisera's mother, instanced above on another occasion, are also a noble example of the use of Interrogations. Nor can I in this place pass by a passage in the historical part of Scripture; I mean the words of Christ, in this Figure of self-interrogation and answer: "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing, are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet." Matt. xi. 7—9.—*Dr. Pearce.*

That the sense receives strength, as well as beauty, from this Figure, is no where so visible as in the poetical and prophetical parts of Scripture. Numberless instances might be easily produced; and we are puzzled how to pitch on any in particular, amidst so fine variety, lest the choice might give room to call our judgment in question, for taking no notice of others, that perhaps are more remarkable.

Any reader will observe, that there is a poetical air in the

strengthened, and thrown more forcibly along by this sort of Figure? "Would you," says

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predictions of Balaam in the 23d chapter of Numbers, and that there is particularly an uncommon grandeur in ver. 19.

"God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or, hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

What is the cause of this grandeur will immediately be seen, if the sense be preserved, and the words thrown out of interrogation:

"God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent. What he has said, he will do; and what he has spoke, he will make good."

The difference is so visible, that it is needless to enlarge upon it.

How artfully does St. Paul, in Acts xxvi. transfer his discourse from Festus to Agrippa. In ver. 26. he speaks of him in the third person. "The King (says he) knoweth of these things, before whom I also speak freely——" Then in the following he turns short upon him: "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?" and immediately after answers his own question, "I know that thou believest." The smoothest eloquence, the most insinuating complaisance, could never have made such impression on Agrippa, as this unexpected and pathetic address.

To these instances may be added the whole 38th chapter of Job; where we behold the Almighty Creator expostulating with his creature, in terms which express at once the majesty and perfection of the one, the meanness and frailty of the other. There we see how vastly useful the Figure of Interrogation is, in giving us a lofty idea of the Deity, whilst every Question awes us into silence, and inspires a sense of our insufficiency.

Demosthenes,* "go about the city, and demand what news? What greater news can there be, than that a Macedonian enslaves the Athenians, and lords it over Greece? Is Philip dead? No: but he is very sick. And what advantage would accrue to you from his death, when, as soon as his head is laid, you yourselves will raise up another Philip?" And again,† "Let us set sail for Macedonia. But where shall we land? [2]The very war will discover to us the rotten and unguarded sides of Philip." Had this been uttered simply and without Interrogation, it would have fallen vastly short of the majesty requisite to the subject in debate. But as it is, the energy and rapidity that appears in every question and answer, and the quick replies to his own demands, as if they were the objections of another person, not only renders his oration more sublime and lofty, but more plausible and probable. For the Pathetic then works the most surprising effects upon us, when it

* Demosth. Philip. 1ma. † Ibid.

[2] Here are two words in the original, which are omitted in the translation; ηρετο τις, *somebody may demand;* but they manifestly debase the beauty of the figure. Dr. Pearce has an ingenious conjecture, that, having been sometime set as marginal explanations, they crept insensibly into the text.

seems not fitted to the subject by the skill of the speaker, but to flow opportunely from it. And this method of questioning and answering to one's self, imitates the quick emotions of a passion in its birth. For in common conversation, when people are questioned, they are warmed at once, and answer the demands put to them with earnestness and truth. And thus this Figure of Question and Answer is of wonderful efficacy in prevailing upon the hearer, and imposing on him a belief, that those things, which are studied and laboured, are uttered without premeditation, in the heat and fluency of discourse.—[What follows here is the beginning of a sentence now maimed and imperfect, but it is evident, from the few words yet remaining, that the Author was going to add another instance of the use of this Figure from Herodotus.] * *

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SECTION XIX.

* * * * * * [The beginning of this Section is lost, but the sense is easily supplied from what immediately follows.] An-

other great help in attaining grandeur, is banishing the Copulatives at a proper season. For sentences, artfully divested of Conjunctions, drop smoothly down, and the periods are poured along in such a manner, that they seem to outstrip the very thought of the speaker. [1] "Then (says Xenophon*) closing

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[1] "The want of a scrupulous connexion draws things into a lesser compass, and adds the greater spirit and emotion.—For the more rays are collected in a point, the more vigorous is the flame. Hence there is yet greater emphasis, when the rout of an army is shewn in the same contracted manner, as in the 24th of the Odyssey, l. 610, which has some resemblance to Sallust's description of the same thing, agreeable to his usual conciseness, in these four words only, *sequi, fugere, occidi, capi.*"—*Essay on the Odyssey*, p. 2d, 113.

Voltaire has endeavoured to shew the hurry and confusion of a battle, in the same manner, in the Henriade. Chant. 6.

François, Anglois, Lorrains, que la fureur assemble,
Avançoient, combattoient, frappoient, mouroient ensemble.

The hurry and distraction of Dido's spirits, at Æneas's departure, is visible from the abrupt and precipitate manner in which she commands her servants to endeavour to stop him:

——Ite,
Ferte citi flammas, date vela, impellite remos.
Æneid. II.

Haste, haul my galleys out; pursue the foe;
Bring flaming brands, set sail, and quickly row.
Dryden.

* Rerum Græc. p. 219. ed. Oxon. et in Orat. de Agesil.

their shields together, they were pushed, they fought, they slew, they were slain." So Eurylochus in Homer:*

> We went, Ulysses! (such was thy command)
> Through the lone thicket, and the desert land;
> A palace in a woody vale we found,
> Brown with dark forests, and with shades around.
>
> *Mr. Pope.*

For words of this sort dissevered from one another, and yet uttered at the same time with precipitation, carry with them the energy and marks of a consternation, which at once restrains and accelerates the words. So skilfully has Homer rejected the Conjunctions.

SECTION XX.

But nothing so effectually moves, as a heap of Figures combined together. [1] For

* Odyss. κ. ver. 251.

[1] Amongst the various and beautiful instances of an assemblage of figures, which may be produced, and which so frequently occur in the best writings, one, I believe, has hitherto not been taken notice of; I mean the four last verses of the 24th Psalm.

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is

when two or three are linked together in firm confederacy, they communicate strength, efficacy, and beauty to one another. So in Demosthenes' oration * against Midias, the Asyndetons are blended and mixed together with the repetitions and lively description. "There are several turns in the gesture, in the look, in the voice of the man, who does violence to another, which it is impossible for the party that suffers such violence, to express." And that the course of his oration might not languish or grow dull by a further progress in the same track (for calmness and sedateness attend always upon order, but the Pathetic always rejects order, because it throws the soul into transport and emotion), he passes immediately to new Asyndetons

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the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battles. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts: he is the King of glory!"

There are innumerable instances of this kind in the poetical parts of Scripture, particularly in the Song of Deborah (Judges, chap. v.) and the Lamentation of David over Saul and Jonathan, (2 Samuel, chap. i.) There is scarce one thought in them, which is not figured; nor one Figure which is not beautiful.

* Pag. 337. ed. Par.

and fresh repetitions——" in the gesture, in the look, in the voice—when like a ruffian, when like an enemy, when with his fist, when on the face."—The effect of these words upon his judges, is that of the blows of him who made the assault; the strokes fall thick upon one another, and their very souls are subdued by so violent an attack. Afterwards, he charges again with all the force and impetuosity of hurricanes: "When with his fist, when on the face."—"These things affect, these things exasperate men unused to such outrages. Nobody, in giving a recital of these things, can express the heinousness of them." By frequent variation, he every where preserves the natural force of his Repetitions and Asyndetons, so that with him order seems always disordered, and disorder carries with it a surprising regularity.

SECTION XXI.

To illustrate the foregoing observation, let us imitate the style of Isocrates, and insert the Copulatives in this passage, wherever they may seem requisite. "Nor indeed is one observation to be omitted, that he who com-

mits violence on another, may do many things, *&c.—first* in his gesture, *then* in his countenance, and *thirdly* in his voice, which," *&c.* And if you proceed to insert the Conjunctions, [1] you will find, that, by smoothing the roughness, and filling up the breaks by such additions, what was before forcibly, surprisingly, irresistibly pathetical, will lose all its energy and spirit, will have all its fire immediately extinguished. To bind the limbs of racers, is to deprive them of active motion and the power of stretching. In like manner, the Pathetic, when embarrassed and entangled in the bonds of Copulatives, cannot subsist without difficulty. It is quite deprived of liberty in its race, and divested of that impetuosity, by which it strikes the very instant it is discharged.

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[1] No writer ever made a less use of Copulatives than St. Paul. His thoughts poured in so fast upon him, that he had no leisure to knit them together, by the help of particles, but has by that means given them weight, spirit, energy, and strong significance. An instance of it may be seen in 2 Corinth. chap. vi. From ver. 4, to 10, is but one sentence, of near thirty different members, which are all detached from one another; and if the Copulatives be inserted after the Isocratean manner, the strength will be quite impaired, and the sedate grandeur of the whole grow flat and heavy.

SECTION XXII.

HYPERBATONS also are to be ranked among the serviceable Figures. An Hyperbaton [1] is a transposing of words or thoughts

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[1] Virgil is very happy in his application of this Figure.

——Moriamur, et in media arma ruamus.

Æneid. l. ii. *ver.* 348.

And again,

Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum.

Id. lib. ix. *ver.* 427.

In both these instances, the words are removed out of their right order into an irregular disposition, which is a natural consequence of disorder in the mind.—*Dr Pearce.*

There is a fine Hyperbaton in the 5th book of Paradise Lost:

Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r,
Glist'ring with dew: fragrant the fertile earth
After soft show'rs: and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild: then silent night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train.
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends,
With charms of earliest birds: nor herb, fruit, flow'r,
Glist'ring with dew: nor fragrance after show'rs:
Nor grateful ev'ning mild: nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird: nor walk by noon,
Or glitt'ring starlight, without thee is sweet.

out of their natural and grammatical order, and it is a figure stamped as it were with the truest image of a most forcible passion.[2] When men are actuated either by wrath, or fear, or indignation, or jealousy, or any of those numberless passions incident to the mind, which cannot be reckoned up, they fluctuate here, and there, and every where; are still upon forming new resolutions, and breaking through measures before concerted, without any apparent reason: still unfixed and undetermined, their thoughts are in perpetual hurry; till, tossed as it were by some unstable blast, they sometimes return to their first resolution: so that, by this flux and reflux of passion, they alter their thoughts, their language, and their manner of expression, a thousand times. Hence it comes to pass, that[3] an imitation of these transposi-

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[2] Longinus here, in explaining the nature of the Hyperbaton, and again in the close of the Section, has made use of an Hyperbaton, or (to speak more truly) of a certain confused and more extensive compass of a sentence. Whether he did this by accident, or design, I cannot determine; though Le Fevre thinks it a piece of art in the Author in order to adapt the diction to the subject.—*Dr. Pearce.*

[3] This fine remark may be illustrated by a celebrated passage in Shakespeare's Hamlet, where the poet's art has hit off the

tions gives the most celebrated writers the greatest resemblance of the inward workings of nature. For art may then be termed per-

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strongest and most exact resemblance of nature. The behaviour of his mother makes such impression on the young prince, that his mind is big with abhorrence of it, but expressions fail him. He begins abruptly; but as reflections crowd thick upon his mind, he runs off into commendations of his father. Some time after his thoughts turn again on that action of his mother, which had raised his resentments, but he only touches it, and flies off again. In short, he takes up nineteen lines in telling us, that his mother married again in less than two months after her husband's death:—

But two months dead! nay not so much, not two——
So excellent a king, that was to this
Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,
That he permitted not the winds of heav'n
Visit her face too roughly! Heav'n and earth!
Must I remember?—why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: yet within a month—
Let me not think—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month—or ere those shoes were old,
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears—why she, ev'n she——
Oh Heav'n! a beast that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer—married with mine uncle,
My father's brother; but no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules! Within a month!
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing of her galled eyes,
She married! Oh most wicked speed!

fect and consummate, when it seems to be nature; and nature then succeeds best, when she conceals what assistance she receives from art.

In Herodotus,* Dionysius the Phocean speaks thus in a Transposition: "For our affairs are come to their crisis; now is the important moment, Ionians, to secure your liberty, or to undergo that cruelty and oppression which is the portion of slaves, nay, fugitive slaves. Submit yourselves then to toil and labour for the present. This toil and labour will be of no long continuance: it will defeat your enemies, and guard your freedom." The natural order was this: "O Ionians, now is the time to submit to toil and labour, for your affairs are come to their crisis," *&c.* But as he transposed the salutation, Ionians, and after having thrown them into consternation, subjoins it; it seems as if fright had hindered him, at setting out, from paying due civility to his audience. In the next place, he inverts the order of the thoughts. Before he exhorts them to "submit to toil and labour," (for that is the end of his exhortation) he mentions the reason why labour and

* Herod. l. 6. c. 11.

toil must be undergone. "Your affairs (says he) are come to their crisis,"—so that his words seem not premeditated, but to be forced unavoidably from him.

But Thucydides is still more of a perfect master in that surprising dexterity of transposing and inverting the order of those things, which seem naturally united and inseparable. Demosthenes, indeed, attempts not this so often as Thucydides, yet he is more discreetly liberal of this kind of Figure than any other writer. [4] He seems to invert the

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[4] The eloquence of St. Paul, in most of his speeches and argumentations, bears a very great resemblance to that of Demosthenes, as described in this Section by Longinus. Some important point being always uppermost in his view, he often leaves his subject, and flies from it with brave irregularity, and as unexpectedly again returns to his subject, when one would imagine that he had entirely lost sight of it. For instance, in his defence before King Agrippa, Acts, chap. xxvi. when, in order to wipe off the aspersions thrown upon him by the Jews, that "he was a turbulent and seditious person," he sets out with clearing his character, proving the integrity of his morals, and his inoffensive unblameable behaviour, as one who hoped, by those means, to attain that happiness of another life, for which the "twelve tribes served God continually in the temple;" on a sudden he drops the continuation of his defence, and cries out, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" It might be reasonably expected, that this would be the end of his argument; but by flying to

very order of his discourse, and, what is more, to utter every thing extempore; so that by means of his long Transpositions he drags his readers along, and conducts them through all the intricate mazes of his discourse: frequently arresting his thoughts in the midst of their career, he makes excursions into different subjects, and intermingles several seemingly unnecessary incidents: by this means he gives his audience a kind of anxiety, as if he had lost his subject, and forgotten what he was about; and so strongly engages their concern, that they tremble for, and bear their share in, the dangers of the speaker: at length, after a long ramble, he very pertinently, but unexpectedly, returns to his subject, and raises the surprise and admiration of all, by these daring, but happy Transpositions. The plenty of examples, which every where occur in his orations, will be my excuse for giving no particular instance.

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it, in so quick and unexpected a transition, he catches his audience before they are aware, and strikes dumb his enemies, though they will not be convinced. And this point being once carried, he comes about again as unexpectedly, by, "I verily thought," &c. and goes on with his defence, till it brings him again to the same point of the resurrection, in ver. 23.

SECTION XXIII.

THOSE Figures, which are called [1] Polyptotes, as also [2] Collections, [3] Changes, and

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[1] "Polyptotes."] Longinus gives no instance of this Figure: but one may be produced from Cicero's oration for Cælius, where he says, "We will contend with arguments, we will refute accusations by evidences brighter than light itself: fact shall engage with fact, cause with cause, reason with reason." To which may be added that of Virgil, Æn. lib. x. ver. 361.

—Hæret pede pes, densusque viro vir.—

Dr. Pearce.

[2] "Collections."] The orator makes use of this Figure, when, instead of the whole of a thing, he numbers up all its particulars: of which we have an instance in Cicero's oration for Marcellus: "The centurion has no share in this honour, the lieutenant none, the cohort none, the troop none." If Cicero had said, "The soldiers have no share in this honour," this would have declared his meaning, but not the force of the speaker. See also Quinctilian, Instit. Orat. l. viii. c. 2. de congerie verborum ac sententiarum idem significantium.—*Dr. Pearce.*

[3] "Changes."] Quinctilian gives an instance of this Figure, Instit. Orat. l. ix. c. 3, from Cicero's oration for Sex. Roscius: "For though he is master of so much art, as to seem the only person alive who is fit to appear upon the stage; yet he is possessed of such noble qualities, that he seems to be the only man alive who may seem worthy never to appear there."—*Dr. Pearce.*

[4]Gradations, are (as you know, my friend) well adapted to emotion, and serviceable in adorning, and rendering what we say, in all respects, more grand and affecting. And to what an amazing degree do [5]Changes either of Time, Case, Person, Number, Gender, diversify and enliven the style!

As to Change of Numbers, I assert, that in words *singular* in form may be discerned all the vigour and efficacy of *plurals*, and that such *singulars* are highly ornamental.

[6]Along the shores an endless crowd appear,
Whose noise, and din, and shouts, confound the ear.

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[4] "Gradations."] There is an instance of this Figure in Rom. v. It is continued throughout the chapter, but the branches of the latter part appear not plainly, because of the Transpositions. It begins ver. 1. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because," &c. &c.

[5] Changes of Case and Gender fall not under the district of the English tongue. On those of Time, Person, and Number, Longinus enlarges in the sequel.

[6] The beauty of this Figure will, I fear, be lost in the translation. But it must be observed, that the word *crowd*, is of the singular, and *appear*, of the plural number. Allowance must

But *plurals* are most worthy of remark, because they impart a greater magnificence to the style, and by the copiousness of number give it more emphasis and grace. So the words of Œdipus in Sophocles;*

——— Oh! nuptials, nuptials!
You first produc'd, and since our fatal birth
Have mix'd our blood, and all our race confounded,
Blended in horrid and incestuous bonds!
See! fathers, brothers, sons, a dire alliance!
See! sisters, wives, and mothers! all the names
That e'er from lust or incest could arise.

All these terms denote on the one side Œdipus only, and on the other Jocasta. But the number thrown into the *plural*, seems to multiply the misfortunes of that unfortunate pair. So another poet has made use of the same method of increase,

Then Hectors and Sarpedons issued forth.

Of this Figure is that expression of Plato concerning the Athenians, quoted by me in my other writings. "For neither do the Pelops's, nor the Cadmus's, nor the Ægyp-

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be made in such cases; for when the genius of another language will not retain it, the original beauty must unavoidably fly off.

* Œdip. Tyran. ver. 1417.

tus's, nor the Danaus's, dwell here with us, nor indeed any others of barbarous descent; but we ourselves, Grecians entirely, not having our blood debased by barbarian mixtures, dwell here alone," &c. *When the words are thus confusedly thrown into multitudes, one upon another, they excite in us greater and more elevated ideas of things. Yet recourse is not to be had to this Figure on all occasions, but then only when the subject will admit of an Amplification, an Enlargement, Hyperbolé, or Passion, either one or more. [7] For to hang such trappings to every passage is highly pedantic.

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* Plato in Menexeno, p. 245. ed. Par.

[7] "For to hang such trappings," &c.] I have given this passage such a turn as, I hope, will clear the meaning to an English reader. The literal translation is, "For hanging the bells every where savours too much of the sophist or pedant." The metaphor is borrowed from a custom among the ancients, who, at public games and concourses, were used to hang little bells (κωδωνας) on the bridles and trapping of their horses, that their continual chiming might add pomp to the solemnity.

The robe or ephod of the high-priest, in the Mosaic dispensation, had this ornament of bells, though another reason, besides the pomp and dignity of the sound, is alleged for it in Exodus xxviii. 33.

SECTION XXIV.

On the contrary also, *plurals* reduced and contradicted into *singulars*, have sometimes much grandeur and magnificence. [1] "Besides, all Peloponnesus was at that time rent into factions."* And, "At the representation of Phrynicus's tragedy, called, The Siege of Miletus, [2] the whole theatre was melted

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[1] "Besides, all Peloponnesus."] Instead of, "all the inhabitants of Peloponnesus were at that time rent into factions."

St. Paul makes use of this figure, jointly with a change of person, on several occasions, and with different views. In Rom. vii. to avoid the direct charge of disobedience on the whole body of the Jews, he transfers the discourse into the first person, and so charges the insufficiency and frailty of all his countrymen on himself, to guard against the invidiousness which an open accusation might have drawn upon him. See ver. 9—25.

* Demosth. Orat. de Corona, p. 17. ed. Oxon.

[2] "The whole theatre."] Instead of, "all the people in the theatre." Miletus was a city of Ionia, which the *Persians* besieged and took. Phrynicus, a tragic poet, brought a play on the stage about the demolition of this city. But the Athenians (as Herodotus informs us) fined him a thousand drachmæ, for ripping open afresh their domestic sores; and published an edict, that no one should ever after write on that subject.——*Dr. Pearce.*

Shakespeare makes a noble use of this Figure, in the fol-

into tears."* For uniting thus one complete number out of several distinct, renders a discourse more nervous and solid. But the beauty, in each of these figures, arises from the same cause, which is the unexpected change of a word into its opposite number. For when *singulars* occur unexpectedly to multiply them into *plurals*, and by a sudden and unforeseen change, to contract *plurals* into one *singular* sounding and emphatical, is the mark of a pathetic speaker.

SECTION XXV

When you introduce things *past* as actually *present*, and in the moment of action, you no longer relate, but display, the very action

lowing lines from his Antony and Cleopatra, though in the close, there is a very strong dash of the Hyperbolé:

——The city cast
Her people out upon her, and Antony
Enthron'd i'th' market-place, did sit alone
Whistling to th' air; which but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too,
And made a gap in nature.——

* Herod. l. 6. c. 21.

before the eyes of your readers. "[1] A soldier (says Xenophon*) falls down under Cyrus's horse, and being trampled under foot, wounds him in the belly with his sword. The horse, impatient of the wound, flings about, and throws off Cyrus. He falls to the ground." Thucydides very frequently makes use of this Figure.

SECTION XXVI.

CHANGE of persons has also a wonderful effect, in setting the very things before our eyes, and making the hearer think himself actually present and concerned in dangers,

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[1] So Virgil, Æn. l. xi. ver. 637.

Orsilochus Romuli, quando ipsum horrebat adire,
Hastam intorsit equo, ferrumque sub aure reliquit.
Quo sonipes ictu furit arduus, altaque jactat
Vulneris impatiens adrecto pectore crura.
Volvitur ille excussus humi.——

By making use of the present tense, Virgil makes the reader see almost with his eyes, the wound of the horse, and the fall of the warrior.——*Dr. Pearce.*

* Xenophon de Cyri Institut. l. 7.

when he is only attentive to a recital of them.

No force could vanquish them, thou would'st have thought,
No toil fatigue, so furiously they fought.*

And so Aratus,†

O put not thou to sea in that sad month![1]

And this passage of Herodotus:‡ "You shall sail upwards from the city Elephantina, and at length you will arrive upon a level coast. —After you have travelled over this tract of land, you shall go on board another ship, and sail two days, and then you will arrive at a great city, called Meroe." You see, my

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* Iliad. o. ver. 698. † Arati Phænom. ver. 287.

[1] Virgil supplies another instance of the efficacy of this figure, in the Æn. l. viii. ver. 689.

Una omnes ruere, ac totum spumare reductis
Convolsum remis rostrisque tridentibus æquor.
Alta petunt: pelago credas innare revolsas
Cycladas, aut montes concurrere montibus altos.

The allusions in the last two lines prodigiously heighten and exalt the subject. So Tasso describes the horror of a battle very pompously, in his Gierusalemme Liberata. Canto 9no.

L'horror, la crudelta, la tema, il lutto
Van d'intorno scorrendo: et in varia imago
Vincitrice la morte errar per tutto
Vedresti, et andeggiar di sangue un lago.

‡ Herod. l. 2. c. 29.

friend, how he carries your imagination along with him in this excursion! how he conducts it through the different scenes, making even hearing sight! And all such passages, directly addressed to the hearers, make them fancy themselves actually present in every occurrence. But when you address your discourse, not in general to all, but to one in particular, as here,*

[2] You could not see, so fierce Tydides rag'd,
Whether for Greece or Ilion he engag'd——
Mr. Pope.

By this address, you not only strike more upon his passions, but fill him with a more earnest attention, and a more anxious impatience for the event.

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* Iliad. ε. ver. 85.

[2] Solomon's words, in Prov. viii. 34, bear some resemblance, in the Transition, to this instance from Homer: "She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in of the doors—Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of men."—*Dr. Pearce.*

There is also an example of it in St. Luke, v. 14. "And he commanded him to tell no man, but——Go, shew thyself to the priest."

And another more remarkable, in Psalm cxxviii. 2. "Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in his ways—For thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands. Oh! well is thee, and happy shalt thou be!"

SECTION XXVII.

SOMETIMES when a writer is saying any thing of a person, he brings him in, by a sudden Transition, to speak for himself. This figure produces a vehement and lively Pathetic.

[1] Now Hector, with loud voice, renew'd their toils,
Bade them assault the ships and leave the spoils;
But whom I find at distance from the fleet,
He from this vengeful arm his death shall meet.*

That part of the narration, which he could

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[1] There is a celebrated and masterly transition of this kind, in the 4th book of Milton's Paradise Lost.

Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood,
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n,
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe
And starry pole—Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker omnipotent, and thou the day.

Mr. Addison observes, "That most of the modern heroic poets have imitated the ancients, in beginning a speech, without premising that the person said thus, or thus; but as it is easy to imitate the ancients in the omission of two or three words, it requires judgment to do it in such a manner as they shall not be missed, and that the speech may begin naturally without them."——*Spectator*, No. 321.

* Iliad. o. ver. 346.

go through with decently, the poet here assumes to himself, but, without any previous notice, claps this abrupt menace into the mouth of his angry hero. How flat must it have sounded, had he stopped to put in, *Hector spoke thus, or thus?* But now the quickness of the Transition outstrips the very thought of the poet.

Upon which account this figure is then most seasonably applied, when the pressing exigency of time will not admit of any stop or delay, but even enforces a transition from persons to persons, as in this passage of [2] Hecatæus: "Ceyx, very much troubled at these proceedings, immediately commanded all the descendants of the Heraclidæ to depart his territories—For I am unable to assist you. To prevent therefore your own destruction, and not to involve me in your ruin, go seek a retreat amongst another people."

[3] Demosthenes has made use of this Figure

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[2] "Hecatæus."] He means Hecatæus the Milesian, the first of the historians, according to Suidas, who wrote in prose.—*Langbaine.*

[3] "Demosthenes has made use," &c.] Reading here in the original ου instead of ο, a very small alteration due to the sagacity of Dr. Tonstal, clearly preserves the sense. For undoubtedly Demosthenes makes use of a Transition in the

in a different manner, and with much more passion and volubility, in his oration against Aristogiton:* "And shall not one among you boil with wrath, when the iniquity of this insolent and profligate wretch is laid before your eyes? This insolent wretch, I say, who ——Thou most abandoned creature! when excluded the liberty of speaking, not by bars or gates, for these indeed some other might have burst."—The thought is here left imperfect and unfinished, and he almost tears his words asunder to address them at once to different persons; "Who—Thou most abandoned creature!" Having diverted his discourse from Aristogiton, and seemingly left him, he turns again upon him, [4]and attacks

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same manner with Homer and Hecatæus. I would therefore translate it thus—"Demosthenes hath also made use of this figure, not truly in a different manner, but with much more passion and volubility."

* Orat. prima in Aristog. p. 486. ed. Paris.

[4] "And attacks him afresh," &c.] This figure is very artfully used by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans. His drift is to shew, that the Jews were not the people of God, exclusive of the gentiles, and had no more reason than they, to form such high pretensions, since they had been equally guilty of violating the moral law of God, which was antecedent to the Mosaic, and of eternal obligation. Yet, not to exasperate the Jews at setting out, and so render them averse

him afresh with more violent strokes of heat and passion. So Penelope in Homer,*

[5] The lordly suitors send! But why must you
Bring baneful mandates from that odious crew?

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to all the arguments he might afterwards produce, he begins with the gentiles, and gives a black catalogue of all their vices, which (in reality were, as well as) appeared excessively heinous in the eyes of the Jews, till, in the beginning of the second chapter, he unexpectedly turns upon them with, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest," ver. 1. and again, ver. 3. "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and dost the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" &c. &c. If the whole be read with attention, the apostle's art will be found surprising, his eloquence will appear grand, his strokes cutting, the attacks he makes on the Jews successive, and rising in their strength.

* Odyss. δ. ver. 681.

[5] In these verses Penelope, after she had spoken of the suitors in the third person, seems on a sudden exasperated at their proceedings, and addresses her discourse to them as if they were present.

Why thus, ungen'rous men, devour my son? &c.

To which passage in Homer, one in Virgil bears great resemblance, Æn. iii. ver. 708.

——Hic pelagi tot tempestatibus actus,
Heu! genitorem, omnis curæ casusque levamen,
Amitto Anchisen; hic me, pater optime, fessum
Deseris, heu! tantis nequicquam erepte periclis.

As does a passage also in the poetical book of Job, chap. xvi. ver. 7, where, after he had said of God, "But now he hath

What! must the faithful servants of my lord
Forego their tasks for them to crown the board?
I scorn their love, and I detest their sight;
And may they share their last of feasts to-night!
Why thus, ungen'rous men, devour my son?
Why riot thus, till he be quite undone?
Heedless of him, yet timely hence retire,
And fear the vengeance of his awful sire.
Did not your fathers oft his might commend?
And children you the wondrous tale attend?
That injur'd hero you return'd may see,
Think what he was, and dread what he may be.

SECTION XXVIII.

THAT a Periphrasis (or Circumlocution) is a cause of Sublimity, nobody, I think, can deny. For as in music an important word is rendered more sweet, by the divisions which are run harmoniously upon it; so a Periphrasis sweetens a discourse carried on in propriety of language, and contributes very much to the ornament of it, especially if there be no jarring or discord in it, but every part be judiciously and musically tempered.

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made me weary," by a sudden Transition, he addresses his speech to God in the words immediately following, "Thou hast made desolate all my company."—*Dr. Pearce.*

This may be established beyond dispute from a passage of Plato, in the beginning of his Funeral Oration: "[1] We have now discharged the last duties we owe to these our departed friends, who, thus provided, make the fatal voyage. They have been conducted pub-

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[1] Archbishop Tillotson will afford us an instance of the use of this Figure, on the same thought almost as that quoted by Longinus from Plato.

"When we consider that we have but a little while to be here, that we are upon our journey travelling towards our heavenly country, where we shall meet with all the delights we can desire, it ought not to trouble us much to endure storms and foul ways, and to want many of those accommodations we might expect at home. This is the common fate of travellers, and we must take things as we find them, and not look to have every thing just to our mind. These difficulties and inconveniences will shortly be over, and after a few days will be quite forgotten, and be to us as though they had never been. And when we are safely landed in our own country, with what pleasure shall we look back on these rough and boisterous seas we have escaped?"—1st Vol. p. 98, *folio*.

In each passage Death is the principal thought to which all the circumstances of the Circumlocutions chiefly refer; but the Archbishop has wound it up to a greater height, and tempered it with more agreeable and more extensive sweetness. Plato inters his heroes, and then bids them adieu; but the Christian orator conducts them to a better world, from whence he gives them a retrospect of that through which they have passed, to enlarge the comforts, and give them a higher enjoyment of the future.

licly on their way by the whole body of the city, and in a private capacity by their parents and relations." Here he calls Death "the fatal voyage," and discharging the funeral offices, a public conducting of them by their country. And who can deny that the sentiment by this means is very much exalted? or that Plato, by infusing a melodious Circumlocution, has tempered a naked and barren thought with harmony and sweetness? So Xenophon:* "You look upon toil as the guide to a happy life. Your souls are possessed of the best qualification that can adorn a martial breast. Nothing produces in you such sensible emotions of joy as commendation." By expressing an inclination to endure toil in this Circumlocution, "You look upon labour as the guide to a happy life;" and by enlarging some other words after the same manner, he has not only exalted the sense, but given new grace to his encomium. So that inimitable passage of Herodotus;† "The goddess afflicted those Scythians, who had sacrilegiously pillaged her temple with[2] the female disease."

* Xenophon. Cyropæd. lib. 1.

† Herod. l. 1. c. 105.

[2] The beauty of this Periphrasis, which Longinus so highly

SECTION XXIX.

[1] Circumlocution is indeed more dangerous than any other kind of figure, unless it be used with great circumspection; it is otherwise very apt to grow trifling and insipid, and savour strongly of pedantry and dulness. For this reason, Plato (though for the generality superior to all in his figures, yet being sometimes too lavish of them) is ridiculed very much for the following expres-

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commends, appears not at present. Commentators indeed have laboured hard to discover what this disease was, and abundance of remarks, learned and curious to be sure, have been made upon it. The best way will be to imitate the decorum of Herodotus, and leave it still a mystery.

[1] "Circumlocution is indeed," &c.] Shakespeare, in King Richard the Second, has made sick John of Gaunt pour out such a multitude to express England, as never was, nor ever will be met with again. Some of them indeed sound very finely, at least, in the ears of an Englishman: for instance,

> This royal throne of kings, this seat of Mars,
> This other Eden, demy paradise,
> This fortress built by nature for herself
> Against infection in the hand of war;
> This happy breed of men, this little world,
> This precious stone set in the silver sea.———

sion in his Treatise of Laws:* "It is not to be permitted, that wealth of either gold or silver should get footing or settle in a city." Had he, say the critics, forbidden the possession of cattle, he might have called it the wealth of mutton and beef.

And now, what has been said on this subject, will, I presume, my dear TERENTIANUS, abundantly shew, of what service Figures may be in producing the Sublime. For it is manifest, that all I have mentioned render compositions more pathetic and affecting. For the Pathetic partakes as much of the Sublime, as writing exactly in rule and character can do of the Agreeable.

PART IV.

SECTION XXX.

BUT since the sentiments and the language of compositions are generally best explained by the light they throw upon one another,

* Plato de Legibus, l. 5. p. 741. ed. Par.

let us in the next place consider, what it is that remains to be said concerning the Diction. And here, that a judicious choice of proper and magnificent terms has wonderful effects in winning upon and entertaining an audience, cannot, I think, be denied. For it is from hence, that the greatest writers derive with indefatigable care the grandeur, the beauty, the solemnity, the weight, the strength, and the energy of their expressions. This clothes a composition in the most beautiful dress, makes it shine like a picture in all the gaiety of colour, and, in a word, it animates our thoughts, and inspires them with a kind of vocal life. But it is needless to dwell upon these particulars, before persons of so much taste and experience. Fine words are indeed the peculiar light in which our thoughts must shine. But then it is by no means proper that they should every where swell and look big. For dressing up a trifling subject in grand exalted expressions, makes the same ridiculous appearance, as the enormous mask of a tragedian would do upon the diminutive face of an infant. But in poetry * * * * * *
[The remainder of this Section is lost.] * * *

SECTION XXXI.

* * * * * [The beginning of this Section is lost.] * * In this verse of Anacreon, the terms are vulgar, yet there is a simplicity in it which pleases, because it is natural:

Nor shall this Thracian vex me more![1]

And for this reason, that celebrated expression of Theopompus seems to me the most significant of any I ever met with, though Cecilius has found something to blame in it—"Philip (says he) was used to swallow affronts, in compliance with the exigencies of his affairs."

[2] Vulgar terms are sometimes much more

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[1] There never was a line of higher grandeur, or more honourable to human nature, expressed at the same time in a greater plainness and simplicity of terms, than the following, in the Essay on Man—

An honest man's the noblest work of God.

[2] Images, drawn from common life, or familiar objects, stand in need of a deal of judgment to support and keep them from sinking, but have a much better effect, and are far more expressive, when managed by a skilful hand, than those of a higher nature: the truth of this remark is visible from these lines in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet:—

significant than the most ornamental could possibly be. They are easily understood, be-

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——I would have thee gone;
And yet no further than a wanton's bird,
That lets it hop a little from her hand,
Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
And with a silk thread pulls it back again,
So loving jealous of its liberty.———

Mr. Addison has made use of an Image of a lower nature in his Cato, where the lover cannot part with his mistress without the highest regret; as the lady could not with her lover in the former instance from Shakespeare. He has touched it with equal delicacy and grace:

Thus o'er the dying lamp, th' unsteady flame
Hangs quiv'ring to a point; leaps off by fits,
And falls again, as loath to quit its hold.

I have ventured to give these instances of the beauty and strength of Images taken from low and common objects, because what the Critic says of Terms, holds equally in regard to Images. An expression is not the worse for being obvious and familiar, for a judicious application gives it new dignity and strong significance. All Images and Words are dangerous to such as want genius and spirit. By their management, grand Words and Images, improperly thrown together, sink into burlesque and sounding nonsense, and the easy and familiar are tortured into insipid fustian. A true genius will steer securely in either course, and with such bold rashness on particular occasions, that he will almost touch upon rocks, yet never receive any damage. This remark, in that part of it which regards the Terms, may be illustrated by the following lines of Shakespeare, spoken by Apemantus to Timon, when

cause borrowed from common life; and what is most familiar to us, soonest engages our belief. Therefore, when a person, to promote his ambitious designs, bears ill treatment and reproaches, not only with patience, but a seeming pleasure, to say that *he swallows affronts*, is as happy and expressive a phrase as could possibly be invented. The following passage from Herodotus in my opinion comes very near it.* "Cleomenes (says he) being

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he had abjured all human society, and vowed to pass the remainder of his days in a desert:

———What! think'st thou
That the bleak air, thy boist'rous chamberlain,
Will put thy shirt on warm? will these moist trees,
That have out-liv'd the eagle, page thy heels,
And skip when thou point'st out? will the cold brook,
Candied with ice, cawdle thy morning taste
To cure thy o'er-night's surfeit? Call the creatures,
Whose naked natures live in all the spite
Of wreakful heav'n, whose bare unhoused trunks,
To the conflicting elements expos'd,
Answer mere nature; bid them flatter thee;
Oh! thou shalt find——

The whole is carried on with so much spirit, and supported by such an air of solemnity, that it is noble and affecting. Yet the same expressions and allusions, in inferior hands, might have retained their original baseness, and been quite ridiculous.

* Herod. l. 6. c. 75.

seized with madness, with a little knife that he had, cut his flesh into small pieces, till, having entirely mangled his body, he expired." And again,* "Pythes, remaining still in the ship, fought courageously, till he was hacked in pieces." These expressions approach near to vulgar, but are far from having vulgar significations.

SECTION XXXII.

As to a proper number of Metaphors, Cecilius has gone into their opinion, who have settled it at two or three at most, in expressing the same object. But in this also, let Demosthenes be observed as our model and guide; and by him we shall find, that the proper time to apply them, is, when the passions are so much worked up, as to hurry on like a torrent, and unavoidably carry along with them a whole crowd of metaphors. "[1] Those

* Herod. l. 7. c. 181.

[1] Demosthenes, in this instance, bursts not out upon the traitorous creatures of Philip, with such bitterness and severity; strikes them not dumb, with such a continuation of vehement and cutting Metaphors; as St. Jude some profligate wretches in his Epistle, ver. 12, 13:—

prostituted souls, those cringing traitors, those furies of the commonwealth, who have combined to wound and mangle their country, who have drunk up its liberty in healths, to Philip once, and since to Alexander, measuring their happiness by their belly and their lust. As for those generous principles of honour, and that maxim, *never to endure a master*, which to our brave forefathers were the high ambition of life, and the standard of felicity, these they have quite subverted." Here, by means of this multitude of Tropes, the orator bursts out upon the traitors in the warmest indignation. It is, however, the

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"These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds: trees, whose fruit withereth, without fruit, plucked up by the roots: raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame: wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever."

By how much the bold defence of Christianity, against the lewd practices, insatiable lusts, and impious blasphemies of wicked abandoned men, is more glorious than the defence of a petty state, against the intrigues of a foreign tyrant; or, by how much more honourable and praiseworthy it is, to contend for the glory of God and religion, than the reputation of one republic; by so much does this passage of the apostle exceed that of Demosthenes, commended by Longinus, in force of expression, liveliness of allusion, and height of Sublimity.

precept of Aristotle and Theophrastus, that bold Metaphors ought to be introduced with some small alleviations; such as, *if it may be so expressed;* and *as it were*, and *if I may speak with so much boldness.* For this excuse, say they, very much palliates the hardness of the figures.

Such a rule hath a general use, and therefore I admit it: yet still I maintain, what I advanced before in regard to Figures, that bold [2] Metaphors, and those too in good plenty, are very seasonable in a noble composition, where they are always mitigated and softened, by the vehement Pathetic and generous Sublime dispersed through the

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[2] This remark shews the penetration of the judgment of Longinus, and proves the propriety of the strong Metaphors in Scripture; as when arrows are said to be "drunk with blood," and a "sword to devour flesh." (Deut. xxxii. 42.) It illustrates the eloquence of St. Paul, who uses stronger, more expressive, and more accumulated Metaphors, than any other writer; as when, for instance, he styles his converts, "His joy, his crown, his hope, his glory, his crown of rejoicing." (Phil. iii. 9.) When he exhorts them "to put on Christ." (Rom. xiii. 14.) When he speaks against the heathens, "who had changed the truth of God into a lie." (Rom. i. 25.) When against wicked men, "whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is their shame." (Phil. iii. 19.) See a chain of strong ones, Rom. iii. 13—18.

whole. For as it is the nature of the Pathetic and Sublime, to run rapidly along, and carry all before them, so they require the figures, they are worked up in, to be strong and forcible, and do not so much as give leisure to a hearer, to cavil at their number, because they immediately strike his imagination, and inflame him with all the warmth and fire of the speaker.

But further, in Illustrations and Descriptions, there is nothing so expressive and significant, as a chain of continued Tropes. By these has Xenophon * described, in so pompous and magnificent terms, the anatomy of the human body. By these has Plato † described the same thing, in so unparalleled, so Divine a manner. "[3] The head of man *he*

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* Απομνημον. l. 1. c. 45. ed. Oxon.

† Plato in Timæo passim.

[3] The Allegory or chain of Metaphors that occurs in Psalm lxxx. 8, is no way inferior to this of Plato. The royal author speaks thus of the people of Israel under the Metaphor of a vine:

"Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it. Thou madest room for it, and when it had taken root, it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedar-trees. She stretched out her branches unto the sea, and her boughs unto the river."—*Dr. Pearce.*

calls a citadel. The neck is an isthmus placed between the head and the breast. The vertebræ, or joints, on which it turns, are so many hinges. Pleasure is the bait, which allures men to evil, and the tongue is the informer of tastes. The heart, being the knot

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St. Paul has nobly described, in a continuation of Metaphors, the Christian armour, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. vi. 13, &c.

The sublime description of the horse in Job, chap. xxxix. 19—25, has been highly applauded by several writers. The reader may see some just observations on it, in the Guardian, No. 86. But the 29th chapter of the same book will afford as fine instances of the beauty and energy of this figure as can any where be met with :

" Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me!—when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me : when I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil! —When the ear heard me, then it blessed me ; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me.——The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me ; judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor."

There is another beautiful use of this Figure in the latter part of the 65th Psalm. The description is lively, and what the French call *riante,* or laughing. It has indeed been frequently observed, that the Eastern writings abound very much in strong Metaphors ; but in Scripture they are always supported by a ground-work of masculine and nervous strength, without which they are apt to swell into ridiculous Bombast.

of the veins, and the fountain from whence the blood arises, and briskly circulates through all the members, is a watch-tower completely fortified. The pores *he calls* narrow streets. And because the heart is subject to violent palpitations, either when disturbed with fear of some impending evil, or when inflamed with wrath, the gods, *says he*, have provided against any ill effect that might hence arise, by giving a place in the body to the lungs, a soft and bloodless substance, furnished with inward vacuities, like a sponge, that whenever choler inflames the heart, the lungs should easily yield, should gradually break its violent strokes, and preserve it from harm. The seat of the concupiscible passions, *he has named* the apartment of the women; the seat of the irascible, the apartment of the men. The spleen is the sponge of the entrails, from whence, when filled with excrements, it is swelled and bloated. Afterwards (proceeds he) the gods covered all those parts with flesh, their rampart and defence against the extremities of heat and cold, soft throughout like a cushion, and gently giving way to outward impressions. The blood *he calls* the pasture of the flesh; and *adds*, that for the sake of nourishing the remotest parts, they

opened the body into a number of rivulets, like a garden well stocked with plenty of canals, that the veins might by this means receive their supply of the vital moisture from the heart, as the common source, and convey it through all the sluices of the body. And at the approach of death, the soul, *he says*, is loosed, like a ship from her cables, and left at the liberty of driving at pleasure." Many other turns of the same nature in the sequel might be adjoined, but these already abundantly shew, that the Tropes are naturally endued with an air of grandeur, that Metaphors contribute very much to Sublimity, and are of very important service in descriptive and pathetic compositions.

That the use of Tropes, as well as of all other things which are ornamental in discourse, may be carried to excess, is obvious enough, though I should not mention it. Hence it comes to pass, that many severely censure Plato, because oftentimes, as if he was mad to utter his words, he suffers himself to be hurried into raw undigested Metaphors, and a vain pomp of Allegory. "For is it not (says he) * easy to conceive, that a

* Plato, l. 6. de Legibus, p. 773. ed. Par.

city ought to resemble a goblet replenished with a well-tempered mixture? where, when the foaming deity of wine is poured in, it sparkles and fumes; but when chastised by another more sober divinity, it joins in firm alliance, and composes a pleasant and palatable liquor." For (say they) to call water *a sober divinity*, and the mixture *chastisement*, is a shrewd argument, that the author was not very sober himself.

Cecilius had certainly these trifling flourishes in view, when he had the rashness, in his Essay on [4] Lysias, to declare him much preferable to Plato; biassed to it by two passions equally indiscreet. For though he loved Lysias as well as his own self, yet he hated Plato with more violence than he could possibly love Lysias. Besides, he was hurried on by so much heat and prejudice, as to presume on the concession of certain points which never will be granted. For Plato being oftentimes faulty, he thence takes occasion to cry up Lysias for a faultless and con-

[4] Lysias was one of the ten celebrated orators of Athens. He was a neat, elegant, correct, and witty writer, but not sublime. Cicero calls him *prope perfectum*, almost perfect. Quinctilian says he was more like a clear fountain than a great river.

summate writer; which is so far from being truth, that it has not so much as the shadow of it.

SECTION XXXIII.

But let us for once admit the possibility of a faultless and consummate writer; and then, will it not be worth while to consider at large that important question, Whether, in poetry or prose, what is truly grand in the midst of some faults, be not preferable to that which has nothing extraordinary in its best parts, correct however throughout, and faultless? And further, whether the excellence of fine writing consists in the number of its beauties, or in the grandeur of its strokes? For these points, being peculiar to the Sublime, demand an illustration.

I readily allow, that writers of a lofty and towering genius are by no means pure and correct, since whatever is neat and accurate throughout, must be exceedingly liable to flatness. In the Sublime, as in great affluence of fortune, some minuter articles will unavoidably escape observation. But it is almost impossible for a low and grovelling

genius to be guilty of error, since he never endangers himself by soaring on high, or aiming at eminence, but still goes on in the same uniform secure track, whilst its very height and grandeur exposes the Sublime to sudden falls. Nor am I ignorant indeed of another thing, which will no doubt be urged, that [1] in passing our judgment upon the works of an author, we always muster his imperfections, so that the remembrance of his faults sticks indelibly fast in the mind, whereas that of his excellences is quickly worn out. For my part, I have taken notice of no inconsiderable number of faults in Homer, and some other of the greatest authors, and cannot by any means be blind or partial to them; however, [2] I judge them not to be voluntary faults, so much as accidental slips incurred through inadvertence; such as, when the mind is intent

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[1] "In passing our judgment," &c.] So Horace, Ep. l. ii. Ep. i. 262.

Discit enim citiùs meminitque libentiùs illud,
Quod quis deridet, quàm quod probat et veneratur.

[2] "I judge them," &c.] So Horace, Ars Poet. 351.

—Ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
Offendor maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.———

upon things of a higher nature, will creep insensibly into compositions. And for this reason I give it as my real opinion, that the great and noble flights, [3] though they cannot every where boast an equality of perfection, yet ought to carry off the prize, by the sole merit of their own intrinsic grandeur.

[4] Apollonius, author of the Argonautics, was a writer without a blemish: and no one ever succeeded better in Pastoral than Theocritus, excepting some pieces where he has quitted his own province. But yet, would you choose

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[3] "Though they cannot every where boast," &c.] So Mr. Pope, in the spirit of Longinus:

> Great wits sometimes may gloriously offend,
> And rise to faults true critics dare not mend;
> From vulgar bounds with brave disorder part,
> And snatch a grace beyond the rules of art;
> Which, without passing through the judgment, gains
> The heart, and all its end at once attains.
>
> *Essay on Criticism.*

[4] Apollonius was born at Alexandria, but called a Rhodian, because he resided at Rhodes. He was the scholar of Callimachus, and succeeded Eratosthenes as keeper of Ptolemy's library: he wrote the Argonautics, which are still extant. Of this poet Quinctilian has thus given his judgment, Instit. Orat. l. x. c. 1. "He published a performance, which was not despicable, but had a certain even mediocrity throughout."—*Dr. Pearce.*

to be Apollonius or Theocritus rather than Homer? Is the poet [5] Eratosthenes, whose Erigone is a complete and delicate performance, and not chargeable with one fault, to be esteemed a superior poet to Archilochus, who flies off into many and brave irregularities; a godlike spirit bearing him forwards in the noblest career, such spirit as will not bend to rule, or easily brook control? In Lyrics, would you sooner be [6] Bacchylides than Pindar, or [7] Io the Chian, than the great Sophocles? Bacchylides and Io have written smoothly, delicately, and correctly; they have

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[5] Eratosthenes the Cyrenean, scholar of Callimachus the poet. Among other pieces of poetry, he wrote the Erigone. He was predecessor to Apollonius, in Ptolemy's library at Alexandria.—*Dr. Pearce.*

[6] Bacchylides, a Greek poet, famous for lyric verse; born at Iulis, a town in the Isle of Ceos. He wrote the Apodemics, or the travels of a deity. The Emperor Julian was so pleased with his verses, that he is said to have drawn from thence rules for the conduct of life. And Hiero the Syracusan thought them preferable even to Pindar's, by a judgment quite contrary to what is given here by Longinus.—*Dr. Pearce.*

[7] Io the Chian, a dithyrambic poet, who, besides Odes, is said to have composed forty fables. He is called by Aristophanes, The Eastern Star, because he died whilst he was writing an Ode that began with those words.—*Dr. Pearce.*

left nothing without the nicest decoration; but in Pindar and Sophocles, who carry fire along with them through the violence of their motion, that very fire is many times unseasonably quenched, and then they drop most unfortunately down. But yet no one, I am certain, who has the least discernment, will scruple to prefer the single [8] Œdipus of Sophocles, before all that Io ever composed.

SECTION XXXIV.

If the beauties of writers are to be estimated by their number, and not by their quality or grandeur, then Hyperides will prove far superior to Demosthenes. He has more harmony and a finer cadence, he has a greater number of beauties, and those in a degree almost next to excellent. He resembles a champion, who, professing himself master of the five exercises, in each of them severally must yield the superiority to others,

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[8] The Œdipus Tyrannus, the most celebrated tragedy of Sophocles, which (as Dr. Pearce observes) poets of almost all nations have endeavoured to imitate, though in my opinion very little to their credit.

but in all together stands alone and unrivalled. For Hyperides has in every point, except the structure of his words, imitated all the virtues of Demosthenes, and has abundantly added [1] the graces and beauties of Lysias. When his subject demands simplicity, his style is exquisitely smooth; nor does he utter every thing with one emphatical air of vehemence, like Demosthenes. His thoughts are always just and proper, tempered with most delicious sweetness and the softest harmony of words. His turns of wit are inexpressibly fine. He raises a laugh with the greatest art, and is prodigiously

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[1] "The graces—of Lysias."] For the clearer understanding of this passage, we must observe, that there are two sorts of graces; the one majestic and grave, and proper for the poets, the other simple, and like railleries in comedy. Those of the last sort enter into the composition of the polished style, called by the rhetoricians γλαφυρον λογον; and of this kind were the graces of Lysias, who, in the judgment of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, excelled in the *polished* style; and for this reason Cicero calls him *venustissimum oratorem*. We have one instance of the graces of this pretty orator: Speaking one day against Æschines, who was in love with an old woman, "He is enamoured (cried he) with a lady, whose teeth may be counted easier than her fingers." Upon this account Demetrius has ranked the graces of Lysias in the same class with those of Sophron, a farce writer.——*Dacier*.

dexterous at irony or sneer. His strokes of raillery are far from ungenteel; by no means far-fetched, like those of the depraved imitators of Attic neatness, but apposite and proper. How skilful at evading an argument! With what humour does he ridicule, and with what dexterity does he sting in the midst of a smile! In a word, there are inimitable graces in all he says. Never did any one more artfully excite compassion; never was any more diffuse in narration; never any more dexterous at quitting and resuming his subject with such easy address, and such pliant activity. This plainly appears in his little poetical fables of Latona; and besides, he has composed a funeral oration with such pomp and ornament, as I believe never will, or can, be equalled.

Demosthenes, on the other side, has been unsuccessful in representing the humours and characters of men; he was a stranger to diffusive eloquence; awkward in his address; void of all pomp and show in his language; and, in a word, for the most part, deficient in all the qualities ascribed to Hyperides. Where his subject compels him to be merry or facetious, he makes people laugh, but it is at himself. And the more he endeavours at

raillery, the more distant is he from it. [2] Had he ever attempted an oration for a Phryne

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[2] Hyperides, of whom mention has been made already, and whom the Author in this Section compares with Demosthenes was one of the *ten* famous orators of Athens. He was Plato's scholar, and thought by some to have shared with Lycurgus in the public administration. His orations for Phryne and Athenogenes were very much esteemed, though his defence of the former owed its success to a very remarkable incident, mentioned by Plutarch. (*Life of the ten orators, in Hyperides.*)

Phryne was the most famous courtezan of that age; her form so beautiful, that it was taken as a model for all the statues of Venus carved at that time throughout Greece: yet an intrigue between her and Hyperides grew so scandalous, that an accusation was preferred against her in the court of Athens. Hyperides defended her with all the art and rhetoric which experience and love could teach him, and his oration for her was as pretty and beautiful as his subject. But as what is spoken to the ears makes not so deep an impression as what is shewn to the eyes, Hyperides found his eloquence unavailing, and effectually to soften the judges, uncovered the lady's bosom. Its snowy whiteness was an argument in her favour not to be resisted, and therefore she was immediately acquitted.

Longinus's remark is a compliment to Hyperides, but does a secret honour to Demosthenes. Hyperides was a graceful, genteel speaker, one that could say pretty things, divert his audience, and when a lady was the topic, quite outshine Demosthenes; whose eloquence was too grand to appear for any thing but honour and liberty. Then he could warm, transport, and triumph; could revive in his degenerate countrymen a love of their country and a zeal for freedom; could make

or an Athenogenes, he would in such attempts have only served as a foil to Hyperides.

Yet after all, in my opinion, the numerous beauties of Hyperides are far from having any inherent greatness. They shew the sedateness and sobriety of the author's genius, but have not force enough to enliven or to warm an audience. No one that reads him, is ever sensible of extraordinary emotion. Whereas Demosthenes, adding to a continued vein of grandeur and to magnificence of diction (the greatest qualifications requisite in an orator), such lively strokes of passion, such copiousness of words, such address, and such rapidity of speech; and, what is his masterpiece, such force and vehemence, as the greatest writers besides durst never aspire to; being, I say, abundantly furnished with all these Divine (it would be sin to call them human) abilities, he excels all before him in the beauties which are really his own; and to atone for deficiencies in those he has not, overthrows all opponents with the irresistible force and the glittering blaze of his lightning. For it is much easier

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them cry out in rage and fury, "Let us arm, let us away, let us march against Philip."

to behold, with steadfast and undazzled eyes, the flashing lightning, than those ardent strokes of the Pathetic, which come so thick one upon another in his orations.

SECTION XXXV.

The parallel between Plato and his opponent must be drawn in a different light. For Lysias not only falls short of him in the excellence, but in the number also of his beauties. And what is more, he not only falls short of him in the number of his beauties, but exceeds him vastly in the number of his faults.

What then can we suppose that those godlike writers had in view, who laboured so much in raising their compositions to the highest pitch of the Sublime, and looked down with contempt upon accuracy and correctness?—Amongst others, let this reason be accepted. Nature never designed man to be a grovelling and ungenerous animal, but brought him into life, and placed him in the world, as in a crowded theatre, not to be an idle spectator, but spurred on by an eager thirst of excelling, ardently to contend in the pursuit of glory. For this purpose, she

implanted in his soul an invincible love of grandeur, and a constant emulation of whatever seems to approach nearer to divinity than himself. Hence it is, that the whole universe is not sufficient for the extensive reach and piercing speculation of the human understanding. It passes the bounds of the material world, and launches forth at pleasure into endless space. Let any one take an exact survey of a life, which, in its every scene, is conspicuous on account of excellence, grandeur, and beauty, and he will soon discern for what noble ends we were born. Thus the impulse of nature inclines us to admire, not a little clear transparent rivulet that ministers to our necessities, but the Nile, the Ister, the Rhine, or still much more, the Ocean. We are never surprised at the sight of a small fire that burns clear, and blazes out on our own private hearth, but view with amaze the celestial fires, though they are often obscured by vapours and eclipses. [1] Nor do we reckon any thing

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[1] We have a noble description of the volcano of Ætna in Virgil. Æn. l. iii. v. 571. which will illustrate this passage in Longinus:

———Horrificis juxta tonat Ætna ruinis,
Interdumque atram prorumpit ad æthera nubem,

in nature more wonderful than the boiling furnaces of Ætna, which cast up stones, and sometimes whole rocks, from their labouring abyss, and pour out whole rivers of liquid and unmingled flame. And from hence we may infer, that whatever is useful and necessary to man, lies level to his abilities, and is easily acquired; but whatever exceeds the common size, is always great, and always amazing.

Turbine fumantem piceo et candente favillâ.
Attollitque globos flammarum, et sidera lambit:
Interdum scopulos, avolsaque viscera montis
Erigit eructans, liquefactaque saxa sub auras
Cum gemitu glomerat, fundoque exæstuat imo.

———The coast where Ætna lies,
Horrid and waste, its entrails fraught with fire;
That now casts out dark fumes and pitchy clouds,
Vast show'rs of ashes hov'ring in the smoke;
Now belches molten stones, and ruddy flames
Incens'd, or tears up mountains by the roots,
Or slings a broken rock aloft in air.
The bottom works with smother'd fire, involv'd
In pestilential vapours, stench, and smoke.—*Addison.*

Longinus's short description has the same spirit and grandeur with Virgil's. The *sidera lambit*, in the fourth line, has the swell in it, which Longinus, Sect. iii. calls super-tragical. This is the remark of Dr. Pearce; and it is observable, that Mr. Addison has taken no notice of those words in his translation.

SECTION XXXVI.

With regard, therefore, to those sublime writers, whose flight, however exalted, [1]never fails of its use and advantage, we must add another consideration.—Those other inferior beauties shew their authors to be men; but the Sublime makes near approaches to the height of God. What is correct and faultless, comes off barely without censure; but the grand and the lofty command admiration. What can I add further? One exalted and sublime sentiment in those noble authors makes ample amends for all their defects. And, what is most remarkable, were the errors of Homer, Demosthenes, Plato, and the rest of the most celebrated authors, to be culled carefully out and thrown together,

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[1] "Never fails of its use and advantage."] Longinus, in the preceding Section, had said, that men "view with amaze the celestial fires (such as the sun and moon), though they are frequently obscured;" the case is the same with the burning mountain Ætna, though it casts up pernicious fire from its abyss: but here, when he returns to the sublime authors, he intimates, that the sublime is the more to be admired, because, far from being useless or amusing merely, it is of great service to its authors, as well as to the public.—*Dr. Pearce.*

they would not bear the least proportion to those infinite, those inimitable excellences, which are so conspicuous in these heroes of antiquity. And for this reason, has every age and every generation, unmoved by partiality, and unbiassed by envy, awarded the laurels to these great masters, which flourish still green and unfading on their brows, and will flourish,

> As long as streams in silver mazes rove,
> Or Spring with annual green renews the grove.
>
> *Fenton.*

A certain writer objects here, that an ill-wrought [2]Colossus cannot be set upon the level with a little faultless statue; for instance, [3]the little soldier of Polycletus: but the answer to this is very obvious. In the works of art we have regard to exact proportion; in those of nature, to grandeur and magnificence. Now speech is a gift bestowed

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[2] The Colossus was a most famous statue of Apollo, erected at Rhodes by Jalysus, of a size so vast, that the sea ran, and ships of the greatest burden sailed, between its legs.—— *Dr. Pearce.*

[3] The Doryphorus, a small statue by Polycletus, a celebrated statuary. The proportions were so finely observed in it, that Lysippus professed he had learned all his art from the study and imitation of it.

upon us by nature. As, therefore, resemblance and proportion to the originals is required in statues, so, in the noble faculty of discourse, there should be something extraordinary, something more than humanly great.

But to close this long digression, which had been more regularly placed at the beginning of the Treatise; since it must be owned, that it is the business of art to avoid defect and blemish, and almost an impossibility in the Sublime, always to preserve the same majestic air, the same exalted tone, art and nature should join hands, and mutually assist one another. For, from such union and alliance, perfection must certainly result.

These are the decisions I have thought proper to make concerning the questions in debate. I pretend not to say they are absolutely right; let those who are willing, make use of their own judgment.

SECTION XXXVII.

To return. [1]Similes and Comparisons bear so near an affinity to Metaphors, as to

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[1] The manner in which Similes or Comparisons differ from Metaphors, we cannot know from Longinus, because of the

differ from them only in one particular * * * * * * * [The remainder of this Section is lost.] * * * *

SECTION XXXVIII.

* * * * [The beginning of this Section on Hyperboles is lost.] * * * * * * * * * As this Hyperbole, for instance, is exceeding bad: "If you carry not your brains

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gap which follows in the original; but they differ only in the expression. To say that fine eyes are the eyes of a dove, or that cheeks are a bed of spices, are strong Metaphors; which become Comparisons, if expressed thus—are as the eyes of a dove, or as a bed of spices. These two Comparisons are taken from the description of the Beloved in the Song of Solomon (ver. 10—16.), in which there are more, of great strength and propriety, and an uncommon sweetness:

"My Beloved is sweet and ruddy, the chief among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold; his locks are bushy, and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of a dove by the rivers of water, washed with milk, and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers; his lips like lilies, dropping sweet-smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold-rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright as ivory overlaid with sapphire. His legs are as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine gold. His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely."

in the soles of your feet, and tread upon them."* One consideration, therefore, must always be attended to, "How far the thought can properly be carried." For overshooting the mark often spoils an Hyperbole; and whatever is overstretched loses its tone, and immediately relaxes; nay, sometimes produces an effect contrary to that for which it was intended. Thus Isocrates, childishly ambitious of saying nothing without enlargement, has fallen into a shameful puerility. The end and design of his Panegyric[1] is to prove that the Athenians had done greater service to the united body of Greece than the Lacedemonians; and this is his beginning: "The virtue and efficacy of eloquence is so great, as to be able to render great things contemptible, to dress up trifling subjects in pomp and show, to clothe what is old and

* Demosthenis seu potius Hegesippi Orat. de Haloneso, ad finem.

[1] "Panegyric."] This is the most celebrated oration of Isocrates, which, after ten, or, as some say, fifteen years' labour spent upon it, begins in so indiscreet a manner. Longinus, Sect. iii. has censured Timæus, for a frigid parallel between the expedition of Alexander and Isocrates; yet Gabriel de Petra, an editor of Longinus, is guilty of the same fault, in making even an elephant more expeditious than Isocrates, because they breed faster than he wrote.

obsolete in a new dress, and put off new occurrences in an air of antiquity." And will it not be immediately demanded,—Is this what you are going to practise with regard to the affairs of the Athenians and Lacedemonians?—For this ill-timed encomium of eloquence is an inadvertent admonition to the audience, not to listen or give credit to what he says.

[2] Those Hyperboles in short are the best

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[2] The whole of this remark is curious and refined. It is the importance of a passion which qualifies the Hyperbole, and makes that commendable, when uttered in warmth and vehemence, which in coolness and sedateness would be insupportable. So Cassius speaks invidiously of Cæsar, in order to raise the indignation of Brutus:

> Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
> Like a Colossus, and we petty men
> Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
> To find ourselves dishonourable graves.

So, again, in return to the swelling arrogance of a bully,

> To whom? to thee? what art thou? have not I
> An arm as big as thine? a heart as big?
> Thy words I grant are bigger: for I wear not
> My dagger in my mouth.——*Shakespeare's Cymbeline.*

Hyperboles literally are impossibilities, and therefore can only then be seasonable or productive of Sublimity, when the circumstances may be stretched beyond their proper size, that they may appear without fail important and great.

(as I have before observed of Figures) which have neither the appearance nor air of Hyperboles. And this never fails to be the state of those, which in the heat of a passion flow out in the midst of some grand circumstance. Thus Thucydides has dexterously applied one to his countrymen that perished in Sicily:* "The Syracusans (says he) came down upon them, and made a slaughter chiefly of those who were in the river. The water was immediately discoloured with blood. But the stream polluted with mud and gore, deterred them not from drinking it greedily, nor many of them from fighting desperately for a draught of it." A circumstance so uncommon and affecting, gives those expressions of drinking mud and gore, and fighting desperately for it, an air of probability.

Herodotus has used a like Hyperbole, concerning those warriors who fell at Thermopylæ:† "In this place they defended themselves with the weapons that were left, and with their hands and teeth, till they were buried under the arrows of barbarians." Is

* Thucydid. l. 7. p. 446. ed. Oxon.

† Herod. l. 7. c. 225.

it possible, you will say, for men to defend themselves with their teeth, against the fury and violence of armed assailants? Is it possible that men could be buried under arrows? Notwithstanding all this, there is a seeming probability in it. For the circumstance does not appear to have been fitted to the Hyperbole; but the Hyperbole seems to be the necessary production of the circumstance. For applying these strong Figures, only where the heat of action, or impetuosity of passion demands them (a point I shall never cease to insist upon), very much softens and mitigates the boldness of too daring expressions. [3] So in comedy, circumstances wholly absurd and incredible pass off very well, because they answer their end, and raise a laugh. As in this passage: "He was owner of a piece of ground not so large as [4] a Lacedemonian let-

[3] The Author has hitherto treated of Hyperboles as conducive to Sublimity, which has nothing to do with humour and mirth, the peculiar province of Comedy. Here the incidents must be so over-stretched as to promote diversion and laughter. Now what is most absurd and incredible, sometimes becomes the keenest joke. But there is judgment even in writing absurdities and incredibilities; otherwise, instead of raising the laugh, they sink below it, and give the spleen. Genius and discretion are requisite to play the fool with applause.

[4] Demetrius Phalereus has commended one of these letters

ter." For laughter is a passion arising from some inward pleasure.

But Hyperboles equally serve to two purposes; they enlarge and they lessen. Stretching any thing beyond its natural size is the property of both. And the Diasyrm (the other species of the Hyperbole) increases the lowness of any thing, or renders trifles more trifling.[5]

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for its sententious and expressive conciseness, which has been often quoted to illustrate this passage. It is very well worth observation. The direction is longer than the letter:—

The Lacedemonians to Philip.

"Dionysius is at Corinth."

At the time when this was written, Dionysius, who for his tyranny had been driven out of Sicily, taught school at Corinth for bread. So that it was a hint to Philip not to proceed, as he had begun, to imitate his conduct, lest he should be reduced to the same necessitous condition.

[5] Shakespeare has made Richard III. speak a merry Diasyrm upon himself:—

I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty,
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;
I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time,
Into this breathing world; scarce half made up,
And that, so lamely and unfashionably,
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them.

PART V.

SECTION XXXIX.

We have now, my friend, brought down our inquiries to[1] the fifth and last source of

[1] The Author, in the fifth division, treats of Composition, or such a structure of the words and periods, as conduces most to harmony of sound. This subject has been handled with the utmost nicety and refinement by the ancient writers, particularly Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Demetrius Phalereus. The former, in his Treatise on the Structure of Words, has recounted the different sorts of style, has divided each into the periods of which it is composed, has again subdivided those periods into their different members, those members into their words, those words into syllables, and has even anatomized the very syllables into letters, and made observations on the different natures and sounds of the vowels, half-vowels, and mutes. He shews, by instances drawn from Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, &c. with what artful management those great authors have sweetened and ennobled their Compositions, and made their sound to echo to the sense. But a style, he says, may be sweet without any grandeur, and may be grand without any sweetness. Thucydides is an example of the latter, and Xenophon of the former; but Herodotus has succeeded in both, and written his history in the highest perfection of style.

Sublimity, which, according to the divisions premised at first, is the Composition or Structure of the words. And though I have drawn up, in two former treatises, whatever obser-

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An English reader would be surprised to see with what exactness they lay down rules for the feet, times, and measures of prose as well as of verse. This was not peculiar to the Greek writers, since Cicero himself, in his rhetorical works, abounds in rules of this nature for the Latin tongue. The works of that great orator could not have lived, and received such general applause, had they not been laboured with the utmost art; and, what is really surprising, how careful soever his attention was, to the length of his syllables, the measure of his feet, and the modulation of his words, yet it has not damped the spirit, or stiffened the freedom of his thoughts. Any one of his performances, on a general survey, appears grand and noble; on a closer inspection, every part shews peculiar symmetry and grace.

Longinus contents himself here with two or three general observations, having written two volumes already on this subject. The loss of these, I fancy, will raise no great regret in the mind of an English reader, who has little notion of such accuracies in composition. The free language we speak will not endure such refined regulations, for fear of incumbrance and restraint. Harmony indeed it is capable of to a high degree, yet such as flows not from precept, but the genius and judgment of composers. A good ear is worth a thousand rules; since with it the periods will be rounded and sweetened, and the style exalted, so that judges shall commend and teach others to admire; and without it, all endeavours to gain attention shall be vain and ineffectual, unless where the grandeur of the sense will atone for rough and unharmonious expression.

vations I had made on this head, yet the present occasion lays me under a necessity of making some additions *here*.

Harmonious Composition has not only a natural tendency to please and to persuade, but inspires us, to a wonderful degree, with generous ardour and passion. [2] Fine notes in music have a surprising effect on the passions of an audience. Do they not fill the breast with inspired warmth, and lift up the heart into heavenly transport? The very limbs receive motion from the notes, and the hearer, though he has no skill at all in music, is sensible, however, that all its turns make a strong impression on his body and mind. The sounds of any musical instrument are in themselves insignificant, yet, by the changes of the air, the agreement of the chords, and symphony of the parts, they give extraordinary pleasure, as we daily experience, to the minds of an audience. Yet these are only spurious images and faint imitations of the

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[2] In this passage two musical instruments are mentioned, αυλος and κιθαρη; but as what is said of them in the Greek will not suit with the modern notions of a pipe and a harp, I hope I shall not be blamed for dropping those words, and keeping these remarks in a general application to music.

persuasive voice of man, and far from the genuine effects and operations of human nature.

What an opinion therefore may we justly form of fine Composition, the effect of [3] that harmony, which nature has implanted in the voice of man! It is made up of words, which by no means die upon the ear, but sink within, and reach the understanding. And then, does it not inspire us with fine ideas of sentiments and things, of beauty and of order, qualities of the same date and existence with our souls? Does it not, by an elegant structure and marshalling of sounds, convey the passions of the speaker into the breasts of his audience? Then, does it not seize their attention, and, by framing an edifice of words to suit the sublimity of thoughts, delight, and transport, and raise those ideas of dignity and grandeur, which it shares itself, and was designed, by the ascendant it gains upon the mind, to excite in others? But it is folly to endeavour to prove what all the world will

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[3] Tanta oblectatio est in ipsa facultate dicendi, ut nihil hominum aut auribus aut mentibus jucundius percipi possit. Quis enim cantus moderata orationis pronunciatione dulcior inveniri potest? quod carmen artificiosa verborum conclusione aptius? —*Cicero de Oratore*, l. ii.

allow to be true. For experience is an indisputable conviction.

That sentiment seems very lofty, and justly deserves admiration, which Demosthenes immediately subjoins to the decree;* Τουτο το ψηφισμα τον τοτε τη πολει περισταντα κινδυνον παρελθειν εποιησεν, ὥσπερ νεφος. "This very decree scattered, like a vapour, the danger which at that time hung hovering over the city." Yet the sentiment itself is not more to be admired than the harmony of the period. It consists throughout of Dactylics, the finest measure, and most conducing to Sublimity. And hence are they admitted into heroic verse, universally allowed to be the most noble of all. But for further satisfaction, only transpose a word or two, just as you please; Τουτο το ψηφισμα, ὥσπερ νεφος, εποιησε τον τοτε κινδυνον παρελθειν· or take away a syllable, εποιησε παρελθειν ὡς νεφος, and you will quickly discern how much Harmony conspires with Sublimity. In ὥσπερ νεφος, the first word moves along in a stately measure of four *times*, and when one syllable is taken away, as ὡς νεφος, the subtraction maims the Sublimity. So, on the other side, if you lengthen it, παρελθειν εποιησεν,

* Orat. de Corona. p. 114, ed. Oxon.

ὥσπερει νεφος, the sense indeed is still preserved, but the cadence is entirely lost. For the grandeur of the period languisheth and relaxeth, when enfeebled by the stress that must be laid upon the additional syllable.

SECTION XL.

But, amongst other methods, an apt Connexion of the parts conduces as much to the aggrandizing discourse,[1] as symmetry in the members of the body to a majestic mien. If they are taken apart, each single member will have no beauty or grandeur, but when skilfully knit together, they produce what is called a *fine person*. So the constituent parts of noble periods, when rent asunder and divided, in the act of division fly off and lose their Sublimity; but when united into one body, and associated together by the bond of harmony, they join to promote their own

[1] So Mr. Pope:—

> In wit, as nature, what affects our hearts
> Is not th' exactness of peculiar parts;
> 'Tis not a lip or cheek we beauty call,
> But the joint force and full result of all.
>
> *Essay on Criticism.*

elevation, and by their union and multiplicity bestow a more emphatical turn upon every period. Thus several poets, and other writers, possessed of no natural Sublimity, or rather entire strangers to it, have very frequently made use of common and vulgar terms, that have not the least air of elegance to recommend them; yet, by musically disposing and artfully connecting such terms, they clothe their periods in a kind of pomp and exaltation, and dexterously conceal their intrinsic lowness.

Many writers have succeeded by this method, but especially [2] Philistus, as also Aristophanes, in some passages, and Euripides in very many. Thus Hercules, after the murder of his children, cries,*

I'm full of mis'ries; there's not room for more.

The words are very vulgar, but their turn answering so exactly to the sense, gives the

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[2] Commentators differ about this Philistus. Some affirm it should be Philiscus, who, according to Dacier, wrote comedy, but according to Tollius, tragedy. Quinctilian (whom Dr. Pearce follows) mentions Philistus a Syracusan, a great favourite of Dionysius the tyrant, whose history he wrote, after the manner of Thucydides, but with the sincerity of a courtier.

* Euripid. Hercules furens, ver. 1250, ed. Barnes.

period an exalted air. And if you transpose them into any other order, you will quickly be convinced, that Euripides excels more in fine composition than in fine sentiments. So in his description of [3] Dirce dragged along by the bull,—

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[3] Zethus and Amphion tied their mother-in-law, Dirce, by the hair of her head to a wild bull, which image Euripides has represented in this passage. Langbaine observes, that there is a fine sculpture on this subject, by Taurisius, in the palace of Farnese at Rome, of which Baptista de Cavalleriis has given us a print in l. iii. p. 3. *antiq. statuarum urbis Romæ.*

There is a much greater Image than this in the Paradise Lost, B. vi. 644. with which this remark of Longinus on the sedate grandeur and judicious pauses will exactly square:

> From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,
> They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
> Rocks, waters, woods; and by the shaggy tops
> Uplifting bore them in their hands.——

So again in Book ii. ver. 557.—When the fallen spirits are engaged in deep and abstruse researches concerning fate, free-will, foreknowledge, the very structure of the words expresses the intricacy of the discourse; and the repetition of some of the words, with epithets of slow pronunciation, shews the difficulty of making advancements in such unfathomable points:

> Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
> In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
> Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;
> Fix'd fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute;
> And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.

Whene'er the madd'ning creature rag'd about
And whirl'd his bulk around in awkward circles,
The dame, the oak, the rock, were dragg'd along.

The thought itself is noble, but is more ennobled, because the terms used in it are harmonious, and neither run too hastily off the ear, nor are, as it were, mechanically accelerated. They are disposed into due pauses, mutually supporting one another; these pauses are all of a slow and stately measure, sedately mounting to solid and substantial grandeur.

SECTION XLI.

Nothing so much debases Sublimity as broken and precipitate measures, such as [1] Pyrrhics, Trochees, and Dichorees, that are fit for nothing but dances. Periods tuned in these numbers, are indeed neat and brisk, but devoid of passion; and their cadence being eternally the same, becomes very disagreeable. But what is still worse, as in songs, the notes divert the mind from the sense, and make us attentive only to the

[1] A Pyrrhic is a foot of two short syllables; a Trochee of one long and one short; and a Dichoree is a double Trochee.

music; so these brisk and rhyming periods never raise in the audience any passion suitable to the subject, but only an attention to the run of the words. Hence, foreseeing the places where they must necessarily rest, they have gestures answering to every turn, can even beat the time, and tell beforehand, as exactly as in a dance, where the pause will be.

In like manner, Periods forced into too narrow compass, and pent up in words of short and few syllables, or that are, as it were, nailed together in an awkward and clumsy manner, are always destitute of grandeur.

SECTION XLII.

Contraction of Style is another great diminution of Sublimity. Grandeur requires room, and when under too much confinement, cannot move so freely as it ought. I do not mean here Periods, that demand a proper conciseness; but, on the contrary, those that are curtailed and minced. Too much Contraction lays a restraint upon the sense, but Conciseness strengthens and adjusts it. And on the other side, it is evident, that when periods are spun out into a vast extent, their life

and spirit evaporate, and all their strength is lost, by being quite overstretched.

SECTION XLIII.

Low and sordid words are terrible blemishes to fine sentiments. Those of Herodotus, in his description of a tempest, are divinely noble, but the terms in which they are expressed, very much tarnish and impair their lustre. Thus, when he says,* "The seas began [1] to seeth," how does the uncouth sound of the word *seeth*, lessen the grandeur? And further, "The wind (says he) was tired out, and those who were wrecked in the storm, ended their lives very disagreeably." To be *tired out*, is a mean and vulgar term; and that *disagreeably*, a word highly disproportioned to the tragical event it is used to express.

* Herod. l. 7. c. 191.

[1] "To seeth."] I have chosen this word rather than *boil*, which is not a blemished term in our language: and besides, *seeth* resembles more the Greek word ζεσασης in the ill sound that it has upon the palate, which is the fault that Longinus finds with the word in Herodotus. Milton has something of the like sort which offends the ear, when we read in Book i. Azazel, "as his right," &c.

[2]Theopompus, in like manner, after setting out splendidly in describing the Persian expedition into Egypt, has spoiled all, by the intermixture of some low and trivial words. "What city or what nation was there in all Asia, which did not compliment the king with an embassy? What rarity was there, either of the produce of the earth, or the work of art, with which he was not presented? How many rich and gorgeous carpets, with vestments purple, white, and particoloured? How many tents of golden texture, suitably furnished with all necessaries? How many embroidered robes and sumptuous beds, besides an immense quantity of wrought silver and gold, cups and goblets, some of which you might see adorned with precious stones, and others embellished with most exquisite art and costly workmanship? Add to these innumerable sorts of arms, Grecian and Barbarian, beasts of burden beyond computation, and cattle fit to form the most luxurious repasts. And further, how many bushels of pickles and preserved fruits? How many

[2] Theopompus was a Chian and a scholar of Isocrates. His genius was too hot and impetuous, which was the occasion of a remark of his master Isocrates, that "Ephorus always wanted a spur, but Theopompus a curb."

hampers, packs of paper, and books, and all things besides, that necessity or convenience could require? In a word, there was so great abundance of all sorts of flesh ready salted, that when put together, they swelled to prodigious heights, and were regarded by persons at a distance, as so many mountains or hillocks piled one upon another." He has here sunk from a proper elevation of his sense to a shameful lowness, at that very instant, when his subject required an enlargement. And besides, by his confused mixture of baskets, of pickles, and of packs, in the narrative of so grand preparations, he has shifted the scene, and presented us with a kitchen. If, upon making preparation for any grand expedition, any one should bring and throw down a parcel of hampers and packs, in the midst of massy goblets adorned with inestimable stones, or of silver embossed, and tents of golden stuffs, what an unseemly spectacle would such a gallimaufry present to the eye! It is the same with description, in which these low terms, unseasonably applied, become so many blemishes and flaws.

Now he might have satisfied himself with giving only a summary account of those mountains (as he says they were thought) of

provisions, and when he came to other particulars of the preparations, might have varied his narration thus; "There was a great multitude of camels and other beasts, laden with all sorts of meat requisite either for satiety or delicacy:" or have termed them, "heaps of all sorts of viands, that would serve as well to form an exquisite repast, as to gratify the nicest palate;" or rather, to comply with his humour of relating things exactly, "all that caterers and cooks could prepare, as nice and delicate."

In the Sublime, we ought never to take up with sordid and blemished terms, unless reduced to it by the most urgent necessity. The dignity of our words ought always to be proportioned to the dignity of our sentiments.

Here we should imitate the proceeding of nature in the human fabric, who has neither placed those parts, which it is indecent to mention, nor the vents of the excrements, in open view, but concealed them as much as is possible, and "removed their channels (to make use of Xenophon's words*) to the greatest distance from the eyes," thereby to

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* Xenoph. Απομνημον. l. 2. p. 45. edit. Oxon.

preserve the beauty of the animal entire and unblemished.[3]

To pursue this topic further, by a particular recital of whatever diminishes and impairs the Sublime, would be a needless task. We have already shewn what methods elevate and ennoble, and it is obvious to every one that their opposites must lower and debase it.

SECTION XLIV.

Something yet remains to be said, upon which, because it suits well with your inquisitive disposition, I shall not be averse from enlarging. It is not long since a philosopher of my acquaintance discoursed me in the following manner.

"It is (said he) to me, as well as to many others, a just matter of surprise, how it comes to pass, that in the age we live, there are many geniuses well practised in the arts of eloquence and persuasion, that can discourse with dexterity and strength, and embellish

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[3] Quæ partes autem corporis, ad naturæ necessitatem datæ, adspectum essent deformem habituræ ac turpem, eas contexit atque abdidit.——*Cicero de Offic.* p. 61, 62. *Edit. Cockman.*

their style in a very graceful manner, but none (or so few, that they are next to none) who may be said to be truly great and sublime. The scarcity of such writers is general throughout the world. May we believe at last, that there is solidity in that trite observation, That democracy is the nurse of true genius; that fine writers will be found only in this sort of government, with which they flourish and triumph, or decline and die? Liberty, it is said, produces fine sentiments in men of genius; it invigorates their hopes, excites an honourable emulation, and inspires an ambition and thirst of excelling. And what is more, in free states there are prizes to be gained, which are worth disputing. So that by this means, the natural faculties of the orators are sharpened and polished by continual practice, and the liberty of their thoughts, as it is reasonable to expect, shines conspicuously out in the liberty of their debates.

" But for our parts (pursued he) [1] we were

[1] " We were born in subjection," &c.] The words in the original παιδομαθεις δουλειας δικαιας are differently interpreted by persons of great learning and sagacity. Madame Dacier has taken occasion to mention them in her notes upon Terence. Her words are these: " In the last chapter of Longi-

born in subjection, in lawful subjection, it is true, to arbitrary government. Hence, the

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nus, παιδομαθεις δουλειας δικαιας, signifies not, we are from our infancy used to a *lawful government*, but to an *easy government*, chargeable with neither tyranny nor violence." Dr. Pearce is of a quite contrary opinion. "The word δικαια (says he) does not signify *mild* or *easy*, as some think, but *just* and *lawful vassalage*, when kings and rulers are possessed of a full power and authority over their subjects: and we find Isocrates uses αρχη δικαια (a despotical government) in this sense." The Doctor then gives his opinion, that "Longinus added this word, as well as some which follow, that his affection to the Roman emperor might not be suspected."

I have chosen to translate these words in the latter sense, which (with submission to the judgment of so learned a lady), seems preferable to, and more natural than, that which Madame Dacier has given it. The Critic (in the person of the philosopher who speaks here) is accounting for the scarcity of sublime writers; and avers democracy to be the nurse of genius, and the greatest encourager of sublimity. The fact is evident from the republics of Greece and Rome. In Greece, Athens was most democratical, and a state of the greatest liberty. And hence it was, that, according to the observation of Paterculus (l. i. *near the end*), "Eloquence flourished in greater force and plenty in that city alone, than in all Greece besides: insomuch that (says he) though the bodies of the people were dispersed into other cities, yet you would think their genius to have been pent up within the bare precincts of Athens." Pindar the Theban, as he afterwards owns, is the only exception to this remark. So the city of Rome was not only the seat of liberty and empire, but of true wit and exalted genius. The Roman power indeed outlived the Roman liberty, but wit and genius could not long survive it. What a high value

prevailing manners made too strong an impression on our infant minds, and the infection was sucked in with the milk of our nurses. We have never tasted liberty, that copious and fertile source of all that is beautiful and of all that is great, and hence are we nothing but pompous flatterers. It is from hence that we may see all other qualifications displayed to perfection, in the minds of slaves: but never yet did a slave become an orator. His spirit being effectually broken, the timorous vassal will still be uppermost; the habit of subjection continually overawes and beats down his genius. For, according to Homer,*

> Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day
> Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.—*Pope.*

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ought we then to set upon liberty, since without it, nothing great or suitable to the dignity of human nature, can possibly be produced! Slavery is the fetter of the tongue, the chain of the mind, as well as of the body. It embitters life, sours and corrupts the passions, damps the towering faculties implanted within us, and stifles in the birth the seeds of every thing that is amiable, generous, and noble. Reason and Freedom are our own, and given to continue so. We are to use, but cannot resign them, without rebelling against Him who gave them. The invaders of either ought to be resisted by the united force of all men, since they encroach on the privileges we receive from God, and traverse the designs of infinite goodness.

* Odyss. ver. 322.

"Thus I have heard (if what I have heard in this case may deserve credit) that the cases in which dwarfs are kept, not only prevent the future growth of those who are inclosed in them, but diminish what bulk they already have, by too close constriction of their parts. So slavery, be it never so easy, yet is slavery still, and may deservedly be called the prison of the soul, and the public dungeon."

Here I interrupted. "Such complaints as yours, against the present times, are generally heard, and easily made. But are you sure that this corruption of genius is not owing to the profound peace which reigns throughout the world? or rather, does it not flow from the war within us, and the sad effects of our own turbulent passions? Those passions plunge us into the worst of slaveries, and tyrannically drag us wherever they please. Avarice (that disease of which the whole world is sick beyond a cure), aided by voluptuousness, holds us fast in chains of thraldom; or rather, if I may so express it, overwhelms life itself, as well as all that live, in the depths of misery. For love of money is the disease which renders us most abject; and love of pleasure is that which renders us most corrupt. I have, indeed, thought much upon it, but after all

judge it impossible for the pursuers, or, to speak more truly, the adorers and worshippers of immense riches, to preserve their souls from the infection of those vices which are firmly allied to them. For profuseness will be wherever there is affluence. They are firmly linked together, and constant attendants upon one another. Wealth unbars the gates of cities, and opens the doors of houses: profuseness gets in at the same time, and there they jointly fix their residence. After some continuance in their new establishment, they build their nests (in the language of philosophy), and propagate their species. There they hatch arrogance, pride, and luxury, no spurious brood, but their genuine offspring. If these children of wealth be fostered and suffered to reach maturity, they quickly engender the most inexorable tyrants, and make the soul groan under the oppressions of insolence, injustice, and the most seared and hardened impudence. When men are thus fallen, what I have mentioned must needs result from their depravity. They can no longer endure a sight of any thing above their grovelling selves; and as for reputation, they regard it not. When once such corruption infects an age, it gradually spreads and becomes

universal. The faculties of the soul will then grow stupid, their spirit will be lost, and good sense and genius must lie in ruins, when the care and study of man is engaged about the mortal, the worthless part of himself, and he has ceased to cultivate virtue, and polish his nobler part, the soul.

"A corrupt and dishonest judge is incapable of making unbiassed and solid decisions by the rules of equity and honour. His habit of corruption unavoidably prevents what is right and just, from appearing right and just to him. Since then the whole tenor of life is guided only by the rule of interest, to promote which, we even desire the death of others to enjoy their fortunes, after having by base and disingenuous practices crept into their wills; and since we frequently hazard our lives for a little pelf, the miserable slaves of our own avarice, can we expect, in such a general corruption, so contagious a depravity, to find one generous and impartial soul above the sordid views of avarice, and clear of every selfish passion, that may distinguish what is truly great, what works are fit to live for ever? Is it not better for persons in our situation, to submit to the yoke of government, rather than continue

masters of themselves, since such headstrong passions, when set at liberty, would rage like madmen, who have burst their prisons, and inflame the whole world with endless disorders? In a word, an insensibility to whatever is truly great has been the bane of every rising genius of the present age. Hence life in general (for the exceptions are exceeding few) is thrown away in indolence and sloth. In this deadly lethargy, or even any brighter intervals of the disease, our faint endeavours aim at nothing but pleasure and empty ostentation, too weak and languid for those high acquisitions, which take their rise from noble emulation, and end in real advantage and substantial glory."

Here perhaps it may be proper to drop this subject, and pursue our business. [2] We

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[2] "We come now to the Passions," &c.] The learned world ought certainly to be condoled with, on the great loss they have sustained in Longinus's Treatise on the Passions. The excellence of this on the Sublime, makes us regret the more the loss of the other, and inspires us with deep resentments of the irreparable depredations committed on learning and the valuable productions of antiquity, by Goths, and monks, and time. *There,* in all probability, we should have beheld the secret springs and movements of the soul disclosed to view. *There* we should have been taught, if rule and observation in this case can teach, to elevate an audience into joy,

come now to the Passions, an account of which I have promised before in a distinct treatise, since they not only constitute the ornaments and beauties of discourse, but if I am not mistaken) have a great share in the SUBLIME.

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or melt them into tears. *There* we should have learned, if *ever*, to work upon every passion, to put every heart, every pulse in emotion. At present we must sit down contented under the loss, and be satisfied with this invaluable piece on the Sublime, which with much hazard has escaped a wreck, and gained a port, though not undamaged. Great indeed are the commendations which the judicious bestow upon it, but not in the least disproportioned to its merit. For in it are treasured up the laws and precepts of fine writing, and a fine taste. *Here* are the rules which polish the writer's invention, and refine the critic's judgment. *Here* is an object proposed at once for our admiration and imitation.

Dr. Pearce's advice will be a seasonable conclusion—"Read over very frequently this golden Treatise (which deserves not only to be read but imitated), that you may hence understand, not only how the best authors have written, but learn yourself to become an author of the first rank. Read it therefore and digest it, then take up your pen in the words of Virgil's Nisus—

——Aliquid jamdudum invadere magnum
Mens agitat mihi, nec placidâ contenta quiete est."

FINIS.

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